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ABSTRACT

Development of marketing plans can assist not only public school districts in meeting recent competition but will also improve educational processes, increase revenue, and restore confidence in schools. This collection of articles describes a new role for school administrators--particulary for business managers: administrators as "entrepreneurs." The combined effort of volume contributors is to present guidelines for business managers and other school personnel so that they might develop a prosperous district. Part one, a discussion of effective public school marketing, includes "The Marketing Dimension of School Business Management," by John J. Lane; "A Marketing Plan for Public School Management," by Janet Biros; and "Strategic Marketing," by Johney Brooks. The second section focuses on marketing techniques, with the following articles: "Community Analysis Techniques: An Anthropologist's Perspective," by Robert L. Rotenberg; "Needs Assessment: A Management Tool in Marketing a Program," by Maurice J. Eash; "A School District Can Market While Learning to Market," by William H. Dierdorff; and "How to Win Next Time: Public Relations and School Bond Issue Elections," by Charles Stanley. Alternative funding is the topic of part three, which includes "Alternative Sources of Revenues," by Frederick L. Dembowski; "The School Foundation and Other Methods That Work," by John Burl Artis; and "School District Volunteer Programs," by Sandra T. Gray. Part four examines marketing school services in the following works: "Marketing through Community Service," by James Fritts; "Preparing to Market School Food Services," by John J. Lane and George Koenig; "School and Community Facility Use Agreements," by Calvin W. Lathen and Jess D. Caudillo; "Joint Occupancy of Public School Facilities," by Robert Posilkin, and "Community Use of the School District's Stadium," by Barbara D. Twardus. Part five concludes this volume with three works on building citizen confidence in schools: "Home, School, Community Relations," by George Kliminski; "Image Can't Be Left to Chance," by Margaret Anthony; and "Restoring Confidence in the Public Schools," by John H. Wherry. (CJH)

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Marketing Techniques for School Districts

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Editor

Association of School Business Officials International

Marketing Techniques for School Districts

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Foreword

IN THE 1970s and early 1980s, confidence in public education seemed to have plunged to its nadir. A number of reasons might account for this. First, there was a growing dissatisfaction with the results produced by the educational system. SAT scores were continually dropping. Problems with student discipline were increasing. Children were being graduated from high school still virtually illiterate. While all these points are arguable, in general the taxpaying public was growing increasingly skeptical about the effectiveness of the public schools.

Second, because of the reasons cited above, public schools began to lose the support that they had enjoyed for many years. Coupled with a growing scarcity of resources and an increase in the number of agencies competing for those resources, public education faced some financially lean years. These problems were exacerbated by the growing aggressiveness of teacher unions and the smug complacency of the educational administrators.

While there are many complex reasons for the general decline of public education in addition to those touched on here, it is obvious to educational professionals that serious and substantial changes must be made in the way schools are being operated. Some innovations and improvements are already underway, but one that is relatively easy to implement has been essentially ignored. That step is the subject of this volume: the marketing of the public schools.

"Marketing" is a much-maligned term that to many is synonymous with slick hucksterism. When properly executed, however, it is quite the reverse. All school districts perform some marketing functions, but they are rarely integrated and do not attain their potential for success. For most districts, developing and implementing a marketing plan would be a natural progression of the current planning and budgeting processes, and it could be done at little or no additional cost. The concept of marketing for school districts is still in its infancy, but with the use of the techniques discussed in this volume, the idea could very quickly come of age.

That the Association of School Business Officials International has taken a leadership role in promulgating marketing as a management technique is important because of the central role that school business officials perform in school district planning and budgeting. Marketing is a management technique that is concerned with the efficient and effective allocation of resources, and school business officials are principal advisers to superintendents and school boards regarding the management of the resources of school districts.

This book should be read not only by the school business officials, however. It should also be of primary interest to all administrators and school board members as well. If the techniques and processes discussed in this volume are implemented in a comprehensive and continuing manner, the responsiveness of the public school system to the needs of society and the wishes of taxpayers will be greatly enhanced. With the resultant growth in public support, public education may once again reach the level of esteem it once enjoyed.

The necessary information is available; the techniques are developed. All that is required now is increased dedication and time.

Frederick L. Dembowski
Chairman
ASBO Management Techniques Research Committee

Preface

John J. Lane

UNPRECEDENTED criticism, competition and demands for more bang for the buck confront today's educational administrator. Over the past few years, beginning with *A Nation At Risk*, 23 reports largely critical of the public schools have appeared. The reports decry the inability of the public schools to provide a level of literacy, "numeracy" and general knowledge about science and the world of work sufficient to give this nation a competitive edge in world markets. In addition, the public schools—criticized at times for supposed hegemony over education in the United States—face increasingly tough competition. Home study programs, burgeoning private and parochial schools, threats of tuition tax credits and vouchers, interdistrict rivalry for a shrinking pool of students and bitter battles among taxing units for fewer tax dollars have injected an exceptional degree of competitiveness in today's school operations.

This book offers new and exciting ways for schools districts not only to meet the competition but also to improve educational processes, increase revenue, create a positive school district image and help to restore confidence in the schools. To accomplish these objectives, this book develops two complementary themes. The first—marketing the school district—provides the context for the second—marketing school district services. Implicitly, of course, this book also describes a new role for all school administrators and board members but especially for business managers: administrators as *entrepreneurs*.

Many of the contributors to this volume consider the elements of the school district in its entirety—its personnel, its programs, the home, the school and community relations—in light of their function in an overall marketing plan. Others focus on the implementation of a marketing plan with special emphasis on the challenge of discovering alternative sources of revenue. The combined effort is intended to present guidelines and examples for business managers, central office personnel, board members and school volunteers in order that they might develop a responsive—even proactive—school district capable of adapting not merely to survive but to flourish.

Part One: Marketing the Public Schools

In Chapter 1, Lane establishes the need for a marketing approach to school district management, describes the special role of the school business manager in the development of a marketing plan and cautions administrators to be wary of bureaucratic obstacles that may prevent the implementation of a marketing plan. In Chapter 2, Biros presents a marketing plan adapted for the public schools.

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Each element of the plan is carefully explained in light of the realistic demands of modern school district management. The presentation concludes with a practical application of marketing principles to a school situation. In Chapter 3, Brooks refines our understanding of marketing by establishing the need for strategic marketing. The author demonstrates the logical relation of strategic marketing to effective public school management.

Part Two: Marketing Techniques

In Chapter 4, Rotenberg brings an anthropological perspective to bear on the problem of community analysis. Through the application of the processes suggested here, an administrator can come to know his or her community exceptionally well, especially in terms of the community's readiness for market planning. In Chapter 5, Eash describes needs assessment procedures and their application in a school marketing context. The author provides a valuable critique of needs assessment. More important, the approach suggested helps to guarantee that real, not assumed, human needs are being met. The chapter concludes with a case study involving needs assessment used to create a new curriculum. In Chapter 6, Dierdorff shows how, with the help of a business-advisory task force, a district can develop a multifaceted marketing plan. In Chapter 7, Stanley addresses the issue of the referendum, one of a number of litmus tests indicating whether or not a district's marketing plan is working. The author provides a year-round guide to public relations projected to pay off at the polls.

Part Three: Alternative Funding

In Chapter 8, Dembowski explores new approaches to increasing revenue. At the same time, the author provides direction for administrators in the difficult task of developing school district marketing plans. In Chapter 9, Artis presents a variety of alternative sources of funding with special emphasis on school foundations. As the writer shows, Cedar Rapids Community School District is one of a growing number of districts that have begun foundations to raise funds for special programs and projects. In Chapter 10, Gray describes another growing national phenomenon: school voluntarism. The author shows by specific example how first-rate volunteers, given responsible work and made to feel like integral parts of the school program, not only increase school productivity but also help to market schools in ways unavailable to teachers or administrators.

Part Four: Marketing School Services

In Chapter 11, Fritts examines marketing factors associated with three community service programs: pupil transportation services, food services and child care services. The arguments are provocative and the examples compelling. Administrators will find many useful insights in this head-on approach to meeting the competition. In Chapter 12, Lane and Koenig provide guidelines for school business managers interested in exploring alternative food service pro-

grams. In Chapter 13, Lathen and Caudillo argue persuasively that schools of the future will be multiagency facilities. Based on their recent research, the authors identify 14 critical issues that administrators will need to consider before entering into interagency agreements. In Chapter 14, Posilkin provides a specific application of the principles provided by Lathen and Caudillo. The author explains that joint occupancy programs allow school systems to generate new revenue and provide unusual benefits to the school community. In Chapter 15, Twardus shows how a school district acting on the belief that the school system *is* the community made it possible for citizens to have access to the school stadium. In addition to the goodwill generated by this policy, the district also generated new income.

Part Five: Building Confidence

In Chapter 16, Kliminski explains the purposes and benefits of citizen involvement in decisions affecting the schools. Of special interest to readers will be the author's presentation of a community education program. In Chapter 17, Anthony writes from the perspective of the practitioner who knows what well-conceived and fully implemented public relations programs can do to market a school and its services. This task, the author argues, cannot be left to chance. Finally, mindful of the barrage of recent criticism of the schools, in Chapter 18, Wherry offers 10 steps educators can take to help restore confidence in the schools. The author's tone is upbeat, and the theme forms a fitting conclusion to the book.

Acknowledgments

THE EDITOR wishes to thank Professor Ellin Kelly and her students at De Paul University for their suggestions for improving early versions of several chapters. Similarly, thanks are due John McKenzie, ASBO's former editor and publisher, for his courage to be on the cutting edge and for his advice and care with this project.

Judy E. Touchton, ASBO's director of communications and marketing, oversaw final production and printing of the book. Of course, ASBO's Board of Directors, Executive Director Ronald A. Allen and the Management Techniques Research Committee deserve praise for their continuing support of worthwhile publishing projects.

Part One
Marketing the Public Schools

1

The Marketing Dimension of School Business Management

John J. Lane

EDUCATIONAL improvement ranks near the top of the national agenda. Increasingly, however, it is clear that significant and lasting reform takes place not by federal or state mandates but only at the local level—district by district, school by school, even classroom by classroom. Ordinarily school improvement efforts translate into more work for the business manager. But when it comes to marketing, more work is not the issue. Most school districts will need to redefine the business manager's role to include an entrepreneurial dimensions. Marketing or entrepreneurial functions for business managers include:

- ascertaining student, parent and community needs
- interpreting market conditions within the school district
- determining the school district's ability to respond to expressed needs
- developing marketing strategies that ensure continued demand for the school district's services.

Most marketing models, including the ones described in this book, adhere to a decisional framework, that is, like decision making, marketing is concerned with recognizing problems, developing and weighing alternative courses of action and implementing and evaluating these courses of action. Davis (1966, p. 11) indicates, however, that a distinguishing characteristic of marketing is "the emphasis on people variables in decision making."

Toward a Definition of Marketing

An effective school, like any effective organization, adapts to survive. Rarely, if ever, does the adaptation require abandoning original purposes or a central mission. As Peters and Waterman (1982) indicate in *In Search of Excellence*, successful organizations "stick close to the knitting."

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Nothing about marketing contradicts the stay-with-what-you-do-best axiom, but marketing does require that school men and women focus more clearly on the needs of clients than has been customary. As good teachers constantly adjust their teaching styles to meet the learning needs of students, so too must school business administrators focus on the needs of the community and how the school might meet those needs.

Schools provide at least two categories of marketable goods: academic programs and goods and services. The first and most traditional category of marketable goods is quality academic programs including competent teachers and administrators capable of designing programs to fit the needs of children in a particular locale with a view to helping them meet and surpass national educational norms. The second category of marketable goods is the district's resources and potential services. The assumption of each of the contributors to this book is that many school districts are untapped gold mines with unused or underused classrooms and buildings, underused computers, transportation systems, athletic facilities, cafeterias, bookstores and the like, all of which can be sources of new revenue if properly managed and marketed. Furthermore, in these days of competition for students, day care centers, convenient transportation and cafeteria facilities can give a school an edge, for they make it an appealing place for parents to send their children. Family choice initiatives are a reality.

In addition to the assumption that school districts are untapped gold mines, there are other assumptions that need to be considered. Kotler (1975, p. 14) presents a set of marketing assumptions that if they do not quite define marketing, at least provide a framework for defining marketing:

1) The organization conceives of its mission in terms of satisfying a defined set of wants of a defined group of customers.

2) The organization recognizes that satisfying wants requires an active program of marketing research to learn of these wants.

3) The organization recognizes that all customer-impinging company activities must be placed under integrated marketing control.

4) The organization believes that doing a good job of satisfying customers wins their loyalty, repeat business and favorable word of mouth, all of these being crucial in satisfying the organization's goals.

The centrality of the marketing approach to mangement is evident in Kotler's statement: "The key task of management is to determine the needs, wants and values of a target market and to adapt the organization to delivering the desired satisfaction more effectively and more efficiently than the competition."

Marketing begins with human needs and wants and seeks to deliver goods and services or sell the products for which there is a desire or need. Marketing creates an adaptive responsive organization. For the schools, marketing may hold a key to success, and even to survival.

Historical Perspective

Marketing began to develop as a distinct discipline shortly after the turn of the century. With the appearance in 1921 of such texts as Converse's *Marketing Methods and Policies*, approaches to the study of marketing were also estab-

lished. By the 1930s, three approaches to the study of marketing had been developed: commodity, institutional and functional.

Commodity approaches focused on individual products, promotion issues, pricing and supply and demand. The institutional approach emphasized the types of organizations involved in the marketing systems, such as mail order and chain stores. The third approach, as its name implies, examined tasks or functions associated with the marketing process. Davis (1966, p. 11) explains that these functions are related to such activities as buying, storing, transportation, risk taking and market information, functions very similar, in other words, to those required of a business manager today. By the late 1950s and early 1960s, qualitative and quantitative approaches, including mathematical models, were introduced into marketing management.

Educational marketing began in earnest in the 1970s, when colleges and universities began to understand the need for market research, creating markets and the like. Academic marketing is a special case. Unlike business marketing, where the work and appeal of a product—say a car, a detergent or an item of clothing—are easily verified, the "product" of the educational process is complex and its indicators of quality are subtle. Furthermore, because a pluralistic society almost by definition cannot agree on the purposes of the public schools, the effort to satisfy school clients is particularly challenging. Market planning, however, enables school administrators to identify the needs and wants of individuals within a particular locale.

Most school personnel are internal process people; that is, many of us are at our best—certainly our most comfortable—when solving the day-to-day problems associated with school district management. We plan budgets, generate reports and generally improve internal processes. Except at referendum time, we find it difficult to think about the big picture beyond the office or classroom. Marketing, to the contrary, challenges every district employee to perceive the district holistically and to look to the future. In sum, the marketing process questions every existing relationship between the school district and its environment.

The internal process orientation does not lend itself to successful market planning. The organization needs to set its sights beyond itself. According to Drucker (1964, pp. 4-9), in order to get results, business managers need to understand that:

- *Neither results nor resources exist inside the business. Both exist outside.*
- *Results are obtained by exploiting opportunities, not by solving problems.*
- *Resources to produce results must be allocated to opportunities, not to problems.*
- *Economic results are earned only by leadership, not by mere competence.*
- *Any (market) leadership position is transitory and often short-lived.*

Market Orientation/Product Orientation

Whether or not we realize or admit it, many of us in the school business—teachers, administrators and central office personnel—are product oriented; that

is, we strive first to improve our products and services like our teaching technology and office efficiency. Only afterward do we direct our efforts toward the market—potential students, community civic groups, businesses and parents, to create a demand (Litten, 1980, p. 51). Marketing, on the other hand, seeks first to know consumer needs and what it takes to satisfy clients before developing and improving programs and providing services. Several chapters in this volume provide business managers and other administrators with assistance in developing needs assessment instruments in order to determine which community needs the district can respond to.

Marketing Myopia and the Schools

In an essay entitled "Marketing Myopia," Theodore Levitt (1962, p. 46) indicates that every so-called growth industry "shows a self-deceiving cycle of bountiful expansion and undetected decay." The 1960s were a time of bountiful expansion of the schools and, if there is any truth in the litany of commission reports, the hitherto undetected signs of decay are now evident. Levitt asserts that four conditions guarantee the cycle:

1) belief that growth is assured by an expanding and more affluent population

2) belief that there is no comptetitive substitute for the industry's product

3) unwarranted faith in mass production that lends itself to experiment and improvement

4) preoccupation with a product that lends itself to experiment and improvement.

Certain elements of Levitt's cycle apply to the schools. Twenty years ago not many would have predicted the present plight of education. On the contrary, optimism abounded. Students poured into the schools; federal dollars poured into education. We had the new math and the new science. Schools of education produced thousands of teachers. And, following the Conant recommendations, billions of dollars were spent to build larger, more efficient schools. Growth seemed to be assured by an expanding and ever more affluent population. The problem with the perception of relative affluence is that it postpones planning for the future.

In addition, instead of confidence that there is no competitive substitute for the industry's product, the public schools are today faced with more competition than ever. Third, mass production, whether in human services agencies like schools or in business and industry, creates pressure on managers to sell the product, not to market it. Finally, educators have only to recall the myriad of "innovations" that overwhelmed school personnel in the 1960s to understand that the net educational effect of most of the changes has been negligible. We made cosmetic changes. We labeled educational programs like soaps: "new and improved." We did not market.

Myopia is not the only problem associated with marketing in schools. As often happens in education, bureaucratic obstacles prevent the development of successful marketing plans. Bonoma (1984) identifies three bureaucratic obstacles or errors organizations make that impede marketing programs: errors of ritual,

politicization and unavailability. Errors of ritual occur when an organization "drives down habitual pathways even when good judgment dictates a different course" (p. 73). Marketing requires fresh thinking and a willingness to experiment with new concepts, systems and techniques such as those described in this volume. Schools, like other systems concerned with the acquisition and allocation of scarce resources, are highly politicized. Similarly, they are not immune to petty internecine warfare that prevents school personnel from concentrating time and collective energies in response to client need. In Bonoma's view the greatest obstacle to marketing success is the unavailability of line officers. Good marketing practice demands frequent quality interaction with clients—students, parents, taxpayers and representatives of local business and industry. School administrators need to be among the people listening and responding.

In his wide-ranging study of companies with successful marketing programs, Bonoma found that they shared five characteristics.

1) Each company has a strong sense of identity and direction. They know who they are.

2) They continually appeal to customers. Customer concern is ingrained in the company culture.

3) Management substitutes its skills for deficiencies in the formal structure. That is, marketing requires discretion and flexibility. Rules have their place, but are not immutable.

4) Marketing executives in successful companies are valued and given wide latitude.

5) Once a specific marketing plan is devised and approved, it is staffed, funded and fully supported to ensure its chances for success.

It is interesting to note the similarities between Bonoma's five hallmarks of successful marketing programs and Peters and Waterman's (1982) outline of the characteristics of America's best-run companies, which in themselves provide a first-rate marketing plan for schools. Successful companies:

- *have a bias for action and risk taking*
- *remain close to the customer*
- *exhibit autonomy and entrepreneurship*
- *believe that productivity is achieved through people*
- *are value-driven*
- *stick to the knitting*
- *organize simply and with a lean staff*
- *exhibit simultaneous loose-tight properties in organizational structure.*

Conclusion

In summary, recent evidence indicates that our children and our schools are at risk. Confidence in schools is low. While federal and state interventions can provide the impetus and some of the resources for change, lasting improvement occurs only at the district and school levels. An entrepreneurial mentality and a workable marketing plan can go far to upgrade the schools by making them more responsive to the needs and wants of clients and, in some limited ways, by

making school services centers of profit. In the chapters that follow, a number of the authors show that the school business manager is critical to the success of a marketing plan.

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2

A Marketing Plan for Public School Management

Janice Biros

WHILE marketing is a relatively recent development in business management, its scope and importance have grown rapidly. Some experts indicate that marketing management is the most important function within an organization. The concept of marketing management developed because business organizations recognized the need to anticipate and cope with the environmental changes that affect them. In many organizations marketing has been elevated to a position equal to that of overall organizational strategic planning. While specific marketing plans differ relative to the organization employing them, certain generic principles and concepts are integral to all. In this chapter, I will present some of the generic concepts of marketing management and apply them directly to public school business management. A marketing plan tailored to the specific functions of a school district is outlined, and an example of its application described.

Background

Education has recently received considerable national attention. While much of this attention has been positive, some national reports have criticized the state of education in this country. On the local level, school districts are finding it increasingly difficult to cultivate public support for education, maintain adequate school budgets and nurture the strong relationships with the community necessary for the continued growth and improvement of public education. As resources for the support of public education become increasingly scarce and as public scrutiny of educational management increases, public school managers must assume a more proactive, creative approach to providing quality educational programs and services and identifying the resources available for their support.

Marketing management can aid in both of these functions. As enrollments in schools decline and the demographic characteristics of the community change, school districts should assess their communities and evaluate their role in providing programs and services appropriate to the needs and desires of their constituencies. Because of the increased complexity of the larger community and

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the rapid changes taking place in the social and economic environment in which public education functions, it is important that educational managers be aware of those environmental factors that affect them in order to capitalize on the opportunities presented by change. Reinforcing this viewpoint, Kotler (1976, p. 35) states, "A passive firm faces extinction; an adaptive firm will survive and probably enjoy modest growth; a creative firm will prosper and even contribute to the changes taking place in the external environment."

Marketing Concepts

With the above in mind, educational managers would do well to examine marketing concepts and their applications to public school management. While specific marketing strategies and techniques vary according to the organization's role and characteristics, Day and Wensley (1983, p. 83) describe the consensus that marketing:

- *initiates,*
- *negotiates, and*
- *manages acceptable exchange relationships with key interest groups or constituencies,*
- *in the pursuit of sustainable competitive advantages,*
- *within specific markets, on the basis of long-run consumer and channel franchises.*

Marketing allows a manager to:

1) analyze the total environment in which the organization operates, including consumer, social and economic factors affecting the organization of alternative resources and current or potential competitors
2) assess organizational capabilities, products and services currently offered and those that can be offered for a particular target market
3) determine the appropriate marketing tactics or marketing mix to be used for each program or service offered, including pricing, distribution, promotion and public relations
4) evaluate consumer satisfaction with a program or service and the marketing tactics and marketing plan used to promote it.

Primary to any management plan, including the marketing plan presented here, is the clear statement of the organization's goals and objectives. The goals and objectives of a marketing program must be closely integrated if not synonymous with those of the total organization. Thus marketing management and strategic management/strategic planning are very closely tied. According to Healy (1977, p. 53):

> *An alternative perspective that accords a strategic role to marketing within product-markets and business units holds that the primary concern of strategic management should be the formulation and implementation of corporate level strategy.*

Within diversified firms, this encompasses, according to Day and Wensley (1983, p. 84):

- *the organizational context of strategic decisions and the relationship of strategy in organizational structure*
- *the strategic decision processes, including formal systems for planning, implementing and controlling*
- *the specific resource allocation to existing businesses or major growth ventures. The successful implementation of marketing into overall organizational management requires that management have a good understanding of the role and potential of marketing principles and have favorable receptivity towards their application.*

In addition management must understand the importance of marketing skills and demonstrate a commitment to giving the marketing function the same attention as overall organizational planning. Without this kind of receptivity and commitment, no marketing strategies or tactics will be totally successful.

While the application of marketing concepts to educational management requires some modification, and consideration must be given to the legal limitations on schools and the absence of profit as an evaluation measurement, marketing principles can aid educational managers in assuming a more proactive and creative approach to school business management. Probably the most difficult task for an educational manager is to develop clearly stated organizational objectives that have some specific evaluation criteria built in. The absence of a profit measure makes evaluation of the attainment of an objective very difficult, but it is not impossible. Measurement criteria could include such factors as number of students enrolled, success rate of the budget vote or number of students returning from nonpublic schools to the public school.

Another difficulty in applying marketing principles to educational management is the fact that schools operate on limited budgets and are, in some locations, without large sums of discretionary funds. Therefore, many schools do not have funds available to support the promotion and advertising efforts commonly associated with successful marketing endeavors. In addition, public school managers are under the close scrutiny of both their constituencies and state regulatory agencies and must document every resource allocation decision they make.

Despite these limitations, however, tremendous potential still exists for the application of marketing principles. In many areas, the scope, role and responsibility of the local educational agency are changing rapidly with the growing interest in the school as a community resource providing programs and services for all segments of the community. This changing role is usually accompanied by legislative changes allowing the school more flexibility in the type of activities in which it can become involved and alternative resources and sources of funding to enhance its programs and services. Examples include efforts to bring the school and local social service agencies into greater cooperation for providing health care, child care or employment preparation programs in order to avoid duplication, thereby increasing efficiency. Thus marketing can be used as a tool enabling school districts to diversify their program offerings and expand their role in the community.

Some would argue that these programs and services are out of the purview of the public school district as we know it. School districts in many areas, however, are no longer organizations that primarily educate students to age 21; they are becoming school and resource centers serving the entire community. This is

more apparent in areas with a decreasing school age population and an increasing population of adults over age 65. It is also seen in areas where severe economic difficulties have forced business and community organizations to consolidate resources and cooperate on efforts to retrain workers or improve the basic literacy skills of adults in the community. Schools involved in these extra programs often generate alternative revenues like user fees, rents, private donations and grants from government agencies, foundations and private businesses.

The Marketing Plan

The following section presents a marketing model tailored to the needs of the school business manager. This marketing model is a framework upon which to build a comprehensive marketing plan for school management. It must be viewed, however, as a very broad conceptual framework with several subcomponents, subplans and tactics. An explanation of each of the major components of the marketing plan is presented below, followed by a specific program example that illustrates how this conceptual marketing plan can be implemented successfully.

Market Research—Extensive market research provides the basis upon which a marketing plan can successfully operate. For the purposes of educational management, we will term market research "community analysis." For a local school district, community analysis entails the study of the demographic characteristics of the community—its economic and social situation in the community—and the competition the schools may face. In studying the demographic composition of the community, important pieces of information to collect include the age and the education level of all family members, the schools attended by all children in the family, the employment status of family members, identification of single parent households, the primary language spoken in the home and income levels. This information will enable the school district to identify populations it does not currently serve and that may not be particularly supportive of its efforts. Programs or services established to serve these segments could have the added benefit of increasing community support for the total school program.

School officials should also assess other educational organizations within the community; nonpublic schools, for example, compete with the public schools for enrollment. Information concerning various social service and community agencies is likewise beneficial. Very often communities have several agencies that provide similar services and thus duplicate efforts. As resources for education agencies and social services agencies are presently decreasing, both can benefit by pooling resources and cooperating in efforts to provide the services needed by the community.

Knowing the specific social needs of various populations in the community gives the school district a good idea of alternative ways that it can serve community members, thereby integrating the total community into the school and generating increased support for the school. Research in the area of consumer behavior, for both for-profit and nonprofit organizations, has indicated that those constituents who are integrated into an organization or directly served by it are much more supportive than those who are alienated from it (Biros, 1983). Part of this needs assessment could include a mail or phone survey of the community to

help the school identify satisfaction levels among community members and particular areas of need. A needs assessment should be systematic and maintained over time. This kind of information collection cannot be a one-shot attempt; it must be an effort that is ongoing and developmental if the information gathered is to be adequate and complete.

Market Opportunity—Determining market opportunity entails assessment of organizational strengths and weaknessses and organizational opportunities, both internal and external. Initially the school district should identify all the programs and services that it is currently offering to its constituents. Next, using the information about community needs collected in the community analysis effort, the school can identify the services it can provide to satisfy some of them.

This process, called market segmentation, is an important factor in the marketing function. Markets can be divided along many lines using a variety of criteria such as age, sex, educational needs and economic needs. The school business manager should use all the information collected in the market research effort to group his community into segments with similar needs and desires. This is the first step toward responsive business management. From this community segmentation analysis, program decisions will follow.

Marketing begins and ends with the consumer. According to Kotler (1982, p. 7):

- *Marketing is defined as a managerial process involving analysis, planning, implementation and control.*
- *Marketing manifests itself in carefully formulated programs to achieve desired responses.*
- *The purpose of marketing is to help organizations ensure survival and continued health through serving their markets more effectively.*
- *Marketing relies on designing the organization's offerings in terms of the target market's needs and desires rather than in terms of the seller's personal tastes.*

Through marketing the school can identify potential services and programs that, given its internal resources, it can reasonably provide.

Next the school district should assess its internal strengths and weaknesses. School business managers should identify all the district's assets, both physical and professional, to determine just what programs and services could feasibly be offered. This would include:

1) an examination of the expertise of the professional staff and community members who may be qualified to provide additional programs and services
2) an assessment of idle or underutilized facilities in the district that would be available
3) an assessment of community resources that may be used to provide additional programs and services.

Some examples of external resources would be monetary or equipment grants from business and industry for school district use as well as grants or allocations available through social service agencies. Often funds available to these agencies

are not adequate to provide a service independently. If the school and the agency join efforts, however, their resources could be effectively used.

The market opportunity component should also include an assessment of environmental factors that could be detrimental to the organization in providing an alternative program or service. Such factors might include a competitive program in a neighboring community or a tenuous political situation that could jeopardize the flow of funds upon which the program depends.

The last step in determining market opportunity is for the school district to make a final decision on the alternative programs or services it will offer to the community. This program decision should be made with the best interests of both the school district and the community in mind.

Market Objectives and Plans—The next component of the marketing plan deals with the development of marketing objectives and plans and is actually composed of several subplans. For each of the programs and services the district decides to offer, a marketing mix must be developed. First of all, the objectives of the program or service, including measurable criteria for evaluation, must be defined. These objectives entail a description of the target market or specific population to be served, a description of the program or service to be offered and criteria for measuring the performance of the particular program or service. The marketing plan also outlines the implementation of the program or service, budget and the components of the marketing mix for each product and service. The marketing mix includes three factors sometimes referred to as the three Ps: price, place and promotion. Tactics for implementing the marketing mix are developed in the next component of the marketing model.

Decisions concerning a marketing mix must be specific to each program; that is, promotional, advertising or distribution activities are determined by the type of program or service being offered. Because the marketing mix is tailor-made to a specific product and service, the school business manager must carefully assess the communication, distribution and promotional channels and resources available.

Within this overall planning component, a specific marketing plan for each specific program and service being offered is developed—not only for new programs or services but also for those currently in operation. This type of planning process, while initially extensive, in the end enables the business manager to maintain greater control over a particular program or service and the resources allocated to it.

Marketing Tactics—This component of the overall marketing model entails the specific activities needed to implement the plans developed in the preceding component. Implementing the marketing mix includes determining the price at which the program or service will be available. Price, for our purposes, includes the amounts charged for the leasing of idle school space to an organization or community group. It might also include the price charged by the school to subcontract its buses and drivers to provide transportation for community groups. More traditionally, price includes the tuition or user fee charged by the school for a particular adult education program or community social or athletic activity conducted by the school district.

Place, the second of the three Ps in the marketing mix, refers to all those aspects of the distribution process—the channels through which a particular service or program is delivered to the consumer. Most programs and services provided by the school district are distributed at the school district's facility. Distribution decisions within that framework might relate to whether adult edu-

cation courses should be provided at the elementary school that is close to a senior citizens' complex to make access to the programs easier for the target market. They might even extend to deciding to conduct some of these courses at the senior citizens' complex itself, or to deciding to conduct adult education courses at a local community center that may be more easily accessible through mass transit than is the public school building. Distribution decisions might also include when programs or services will be offered. Will a program be offered in the summer as well as during the school year? Will a popular adult education course be offered both semesters, just one semester or all three semesters? Distribution, then, entails the channels through which a program or service is made available to the public and the frequency and ease with which it is made available.

Promotion, the last of the three Ps, deals with the factors of advertising and public relations used to make the public aware of the programs and services that are available to them. For-profit businesses usually have large advertising budgets and often hire agencies to conduct their advertising efforts. School districts do not have the funds available to undertake extravagant advertising plans, but there are many inexpensive advertising vehicles available to them. Inexpensive advertising can be purchased through local newspapers and community newsletters, and some of these publications may give schools free advertising as a public service. Local radio and television stations are required by law to provide public service programming, which often serves as an indirect and subtle form of advertising for local school districts. Professional educational journals also offer advertising at reasonable prices.

Promotional activities do not have to be advertising for specific programs and services. They can be efforts that promote the school in general and include mention of programs and services available for the community. This is where the school district's public relations programs, if well planned and systematically developed, can be a strong promotional vehicle. School managers should seek to promote the total school program throughout the year to all segments of the larger community. They should make concerted efforts to address community service groups and laud the achievements of the schoolchildren and the successes of the school district. Slide-tape presentations, talks by school administrators and exhibits and programs of students' work are activities that work toward this goal. This kind of ongoing public relations effort cultivates and maintains a positive relationship with the community, which sees and then becomes involved with the school district. It makes good sense for school administrators to undertake a strong public relations program to counteract the effects of or attacks on public education. Establishing and maintaining channels of communication with the community throughout the year also helps school districts secure the financial support from the community that is necessary to maintain quality programs. An open hearing scheduled a month before a budget vote is rarely an effective public relations tool and can often do more harm than good.

While promotion, public relations and communication with the consumer and the community are all integral parts of a marketing plan, they are not synonymous with marketing success. If an organization has not taken the time and effort to assess the needs of its consumers, to plan and develop a quality program and to offer it at a price that is reasonable and a place that is convenient, all of the public relations and advertising in the world are not going to sell that product. Promotion is only as successful as the product it promotes.

Market Control—Market control involves the evaluation and accounting pro-

cedures necessary to judge the success of a marketing effort. Like other components in the marketing model, it is made up of several subcomponents. Market control includes evaluating the organization's overall objectives and its specific marketing strategies. Were those objectives realistic? Did the organization attain those objectives within the satisfactory criteria (time, budget)?

On the next level, this process includes evaluating each specific program and service offered by the district: How many people took advantage of the program? Did attendance increase or decrease throughout the course of the program? What was the satisfaction level indicated by participants? Was the program or service cost effective? These are the kinds of questions that the school business manager should ask of each program and service. The responses can then be used in deciding which programs and services to continue and what new ones to introduce.

The process represented by this marketing model should be viewed as a systems process; that is, it is a cyclical decision-making process. Information is passed throughout all of the components, and, when the evaluation component is complete, that information is then fed back and the process starts again from the beginning with additional and continued market research. Thus market control does not represent the end of a process but merely a step in a continuing strategic planning cycle.

In addition to evaluating each of the specific programs and services offered, the overall marketing model itself must be evaluated. How did the process work? How were the decisions made? Was the information collected adequate? Were the goals and objectives translated correctly from management to the operations level; that is, were they offered in the same way that management intended them to be? These are the questions the school district officials should ask in evaluating the marketing plan.

A Specific Example

Let us say that a sample school district conducts a comprehensive community analysis based on its own census, U.S. census data and information gathered through discussions with members of community agencies and representatives of local business and industry. This analysis confirms that a large number of people in the community have been laid off by local industry. Many of them will be rehired by the industry, but their jobs will change and they will need retraining. Some will not be rehired because of poor literacy skills and the lack of a high school diploma. They and others may have to find employment elsewhere.

As a result of this information, the school district decides that people who have been laid off are a target population in need of some specific services that the school district is well equipped to provide. To evaluate the external resources needed for the project, school officials contact the local labor department. As a result, the department makes a small grant to the school district to provide services for this target population. In addition, cooperation with local industry leads to an arrangement whereby the industries provide financial support for the retraining efforts that the school is better equipped to provide. An assessment of the school district's internal resources reveals that there are professional staff members who are willing to teach the basic skills, high school equivalency courses and vocational training courses needed for the program.

This combination of internal and external resources makes possible the school district's decision to offer three adult employment preparation courses: (1) a

literacy course designed to prepare adults for the high school equivalency exam, (2) a course to retrain displaced workers in a new technical skill for which jobs are anticipated and (3) an employment preparation class that will enable adults to learn how to write effective résumés, perform well during interviews and conduct a successful job search. The curricular plans and specific objectives for each of the three courses are developed, and evaluation criteria for the courses are outlined. School officials decide to offer each course at a different time so that students can enroll in two or even all three. They schedule the retraining course at the high school since that is where the necessary equipment is located. To allay apprehensions adults may have about taking classes in a regular school building, however, the literacy and job search courses are conducted at the town library, where the atmosphere is less threatening and more comfortable. The library is also on a major bus route and therefore more accessible to people in need.

The courses are supported by the grant from the local labor department, donations from local industries and a small amount of state aid available to school districts for adult employment preparation courses. In addition a small user fee is charged each of the program participants.

A variety of activities publicize the availability of these courses. An article written for the local newspaper and school district newsletter describes the new program and includes phone numbers for additional information and registration information. Posters and notices are placed in various community centers and at the local employment office. In addition, local industries provide school officials with the names of people who have been laid off, and school officials send each one a letter explaining the program and including a registration form. School officials also phone people who have been identified as in particular need but likely to be reluctant to take the initiative to become involved in an adult employment preparation course.

As these courses are conducted, the instructors and the administration try to determine whether they meet the needs of the participants and what the satisfaction level is. Each participant is "interviewed" at the end of the course to determine to what extent he or she feels the course has been useful. Six months later the program participants are contacted to determine if, in fact, they have found alternative work or have been rehired and if their training has proved helpful to them. The information gathered from these procedures is then used in planning subsequent courses.

The sample school district described here is responding to a real need in its community and, in the process, has probably generated support for its overall public school program. In addition, it has identified alternative sources of funding and resources for program planning and has established strong cooperative ties with community agencies and local business and industry.

Conclusion

Many communities are currently involved in endeavors like the one described above. One thing missing from many school management programs, however, is the ongoing systematic planning process that the marketing model entails. Marketing efforts must not be done sporadically or haphazardly. They must be an integral part of the overall school management plan. Schools are asset-rich organizations that can no longer afford to allow their facilities and equipment to lie idle for the majority of the time each week. Assuming a marketing approach to school business management will enable managers to make more efficient use

of assets and result in a creative and proactive approach to fulfilling their responsibilities.

Current writings in the area of school business management call for creativity and innovation in educational management in an effort to anticipate and cope with the overwhelming impact that economic and social changes are having on schools and the way they are run. Abrell (1980, p. 15) states:

> . . . educational leaders of the future must be better at anticipating, accommodating, planning, initiating and implementing change. Survival itself, much less growth, of our educational institutions revolves around the reality of change and the ability of future leaders to utilize it productively.

According to Lenhart (1982, p. 13) the major goal of public school management is "the effective management of available resources to meet priority needs." He further states that with the increased demand for services, the regulations affecting services and the limited financial resources, effective management is becoming increasingly difficult. He calls for implementing a comprehensive management process through:

- assessment of public needs and priorities
- clear definition of measurable goals, objectives and strategies for accomplishment
- indication of the types and combination of resources necessary to carry out these strategies
- measurement and evaluation of both organizational and individual performance in accomplishing the goals and objectives
- analysis and improvement of weakness in programs and work processes to enhance attainment of stated organizational goals.

While Lenhart calls this a management process, the activities he describes are very much like the model marketing plan discussed above. These similarities indicate that perhaps the time is ripe for educators to examine the marketing concept and how it can be applied to improve the management of their educational institutions. One factor integral to the marketing model that should be integral to school business management is close interaction with the environment. Schools cannot afford to be isolated from their larger community. The more closely involved school district administrators are in the larger community, and the more knowledgeable they are about factors in the community that affect them, the better they will be able to anticipate change and alleviate crises that can affect their districts.

The school district is a fragile organization in a precarious situation. It is totally dependent upon the external environment for the resources necessary to conduct its mission. It is also subject to close scrutiny as to how those resources are allocated and how organizational decisions are made. It cannot afford to maintain an isolated posture in relation to the larger community. Increased responsiveness on the part of the local school district can only result in the generation of greater support from business and community members. A marketing posture facilitates this interaction. Furthermore, assuming a marketing approach to school business management can identify alternative sources of revenue and result in the more efficient and effective use of school district facilities and assets.

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Marketing Model

Market Research	*Market Opportunity*	*Market Objectives*	*Market Tactics*	*Market Control*
Assess: • demographic characteristics • competition (nonpublic schools) • services provided by other agencies • needs and desires of the community.	Assess: • programs and services offered • programs and services that potentially could be offered • organizational strengths and weaknesses • resources, both internal and external • environmental factors Determine: • programs and services to be offered.	Determine: • individual program objectives Plan: • marketing tactics.	Implement activities for: • pricing • distribution • promotion, including public relations and advertising.	Evaluate: • program objectives • satisfaction levels of consumers • total marketing management/ strategic management plan.

Source: Adapted from Lazar (1971).

3

Strategic Marketing

Johney Brooks

> *Marketing is the distinguishing, unique function of the business. A business is set apart from all other human organizations by the fact that it markets a product or a service. Neither church, nor army, nor school, nor state does that.*
>
> Drucker, 1974, p. 61

> *The choice facing those who manage nonbusiness organizations is not whether to market or not to market, for no organization can avoid marketing. The choice is whether to do it well or poorly.*
>
> Kotler and Levy, 1969

THESE ARE the considered opinions of two highly respected business consultants, the first a management consultant, the other a marketing adviser. Their opinions are reflected in two opposing camps of educators. One group is appalled at the mere suggestion of applying any business practice whatsoever to the administration of the public school; the concept of "marketing" the school has been particularly distasteful. On the other hand, those who understand and accept the premises of the marketing concept believe strongly in the applicability of strategic marketing in the overall planning and management of the public school.

The concerns and responsibilities of managing the public school in an increasingly adverse economic, social and political environment attracted increasingly favorable attention during the past decade to the potential of marketing as a public school management tool. Now, in a period still characterized by uncertainties and change, some are wondering whether to "market or not to market" the school. Whatever one's philosophical bent, the decision should be based on informed analysis, not emotional bias.

Nature and Scope of Marketing

Marketing is basic to the business firm, its central dimension. Stanton (1978, p. 4) defines marketing its broadest sense as:

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> *Any interpersonal or interorganizational relationship involving an exchange (a transaction . . . That is, the essence of marketing is a transaction—an exchange—intended to satisfy human needs or wants. Consequently, marketing occurs anytime one social unit strives to exchange something of value with another social unit. Marketing consists of all the activities designed to facilitate that exchange.*

Marketing is a dynamic business process, a total, integrated consumer-oriented system. It involves finding out what consumers need, planning and developing a product or service that will satisfy those needs and then determining the best way to price, promote and distribute that product. Traditionally, a firm survives and prospers over the long run only if it does a good job of satisfying social and economic demands of its consumers.

The Marketing Concept

The marketing concept is a philosophy of business which maintains that the satisfaction of consumers' needs is the only economic and social justification for an organization's existence. In this sense marketing is a corporate state of mind, not a fixed and definite methodology. It is, according to Kotler (1980, P. 35):

> *a management orientation that holds that the key task of the organization is to determine the needs and wants of target markets and to adapt the organization to delivering the desired satisfactions more effectively and efficiently than its competitors in a way that preserves or enhances the consumers' and society's well-being.*

It follows that all company activities are devoted to finding out what the consumer needs and the means for satisfying those needs profitably. A need here is defined as anything that is required, desired or useful.

Strategic Marketing Planning

The key to the organization's survival and success lies in the quality of its strategic marketing planning, which entails:

1) the definition of its purpose and goals
2) the determination of its target market
3) the selection of the marketing mix, the controllable variables that the firm combines to satisfy the targeted market.

Purpose, Goals and Objectives—Every organization exists to achieve some specific end that is its purpose or mission. The definition of its purpose derives from the thoughtful and honest clarification of "what our business is and what our business should be." The statement of purpose translates into the organizational goals and objectives, the guiding strategy of the concern.

Goals and objectives must be realistic, operational and measurable against achievable standards. They must be discriminating and hierarchical to make possible the selection of key resources and efforts on the one hand and, on the

other, the elimination of the redundant and obsolete. Goals and objectives must be both internally consistent and consistent with the firm's purpose. The marketing concept requires that the firm define its goals as the satisfaction of consumer needs in light of the realities and values of the consumer.

Target Market—The key component of any marketing system is the market for the firm's product. Its primary concern should be how to reach and serve that market efficiently, profitably and in a socially responsible manner. The market is the focal point of all marketing decisions in the organization. A sound marketing program starts with an identification and a critical analysis of the market.

By definition, the market is people who have needs to satisfy, the ability to purchase the products that satisfy those needs and the willingness to spend. Developing the marketing strategy holds these people in mind, their demographics, their realities, values and needs in persistent efforts to refine answers to the central questions: Who are our consumers? What do they value? What, above all, do they need?

The market is influenced by demographic factors such as regional population distribution, level of education, occupation, race, national origin or ethnicity and religion. There are also distinct differences because of socioeconomic characteristics of income, family structure and expenditure and consumption patterns. Cultural influences and other lifestyle factors, along with psychological (psychographic) factors of personality, attitudes, interests and the product benefits desired, influence consumer buying behavior and motivation.

For most products the total market is too broad and heterogeneous for a single product and a single marketing program. Instead companies tend to follow the strategy of market segmentation along demographic, sociological, cultural and/or other lines of distinction. In this way each segment of the total market responds in a more homogeneous fashion to a given product or marketing program. Market segmentation is consumer oriented, for by tailoring products and marketing programs to pinpointed market segments, a firm can almost match the consumers' needs within a given market segment. As part of the strategy of segmenting the market, a company can develop for each segment either a different variety of the basic product or a separate, tailormade marketing programs.

Target markets include more than just the direct consumers of the firm's products. In its efforts to identify and motivate its target market, a firm encounters many secondary markets or publics. These are the individuals or groups with actual or potential interest in the organization and its products and activities, those who can affect the ability of the organization to conduct its business or whose interests, activities or well-being can be affected by the organization. A firm's main publics include government—often as regulatory agents—local or citizen action groups, financial institutions, media and the general public.

Marketing Mix—The four basic elements of the marketing mix are product, price, promotion and place. Broadly defined, the term "product" includes anything capable of satisfying a need or interest; an object, a service or activity, a place, even a person or an idea. Profitable product policies emerge from particular consideration of the consumer within the overall social and economic environment. The company determines the specific needs and values of the targeted population and then plans and develops the products aimed at satisfying those identified needs and interests. This may require modifying or dis-

countinuing existing products, creating entirely new ones or taking other actions to delimit the optimal assortment of products to be marketed.

"Price" represents the cost to the buyer. This goes beyond the mere outlay of money or entering into debt for a product. It includes any opportunities forgone, the expenditure of time and energy and the psychological concerns aroused by the marketing transaction.

"Promotion" is basically a communications design to inform, influence or persuade the market regarding a company's product. Advertising, personal selling and sales promotions are the major, but not the only, activities that fall under promotion. Promotion campaigns are designed to portray the benefits of the products to the market in as appealing a manner as possible, differentiate the product from those of competitors in the most favorable light and establish and maintain a good reputation for the product and firm.

"Place" refers to product distribution. Management's responsibility is to provide appropriate and accessible distribution and response channels through which the product can reach the right market at the right time. This means that motivated consumers know where and when the product can be acquired, find the time and place convenient and feel good about making the acquisition. Some consumer patronage motives include convenience of location, rapidity and caliber of service, ease of locating desire products, attractive environment and knowledgeable and helpful sales personnel.

Management of Change, Research and Evaluation

A firm operates its marketing system within an ever-changing environment. Environmental influences include demography, economic conditions, sociocultural factors, political-legal constraints, technology and competition. Within the firm itself there is a set of changing nonmarketing resources—personnel, products, finance, facilities and so forth—that influence a company's marketing system and its ability to outperform its competitors. The internal variables are, or should be, controllable by management.

A company's ability to adapt to a changing marketplace and its external environment is essential to its growth and survival. An organization that becomes unresponsive to new problems and/or opportunities finds itself at risk, its survival threatened. To remain viable it must regularly reassess its basic purpose and target market and, where indicated, reorient its marketing strategy to achieve optimal marketing effectiveness. For this purpose, many firms rely on the marketing audit.

The marketing audit embodies multiple functions of review, evaluation, diagnosis and prognosis for a company. Kotler (1975, p. 56) defines it as:

> *an independent examination of the entire marketing effort of an organization covering objectives, programs, implementation, organization (structure) and control, for the purpose of determining and appraising what is being done and recommending what should be done in the future.*

By reviewing for the organization its policies and strategies, the marketing audit enables management to keep abreast of the changing marketing environment. A good audit anticipates the future, reorients misdirected efforts and points the firm away from outmoded strategies and unrealistic goals.

The School Context

The American public school is not a business concern. It is an enterprise of vast complexity. School management, however, has many parallels with the management of multifunctional business enterprises. The following diagram compiles selected variables that easily lend themselves to logical school market analysis and comparison. It is intended to be neither exhaustive nor definitive but to serve as a useful reference for the ensuing narrative. The interested practitioner could add or delete any number of such variables that might prove more relevant to his or her own situation. See diagram on page 39.

Nature and Scope of Marketing

The essence of marketing is a transaction—an exchange—intended to satisfy human needs or wants.

A complex institution that touches the lives of everyone in one way or another can never be fully described, nor can its multiple functions be capsulated, to the satisfaction of all. Few would argue, however, that the primary function of the public school is to teach, that is, to impart knowledge and skills to designated learners. The common lore holds that "no teaching occurs unless learning occurs." Teaching and learning are interrelated, synergetic. That being true, it follows that the essence of schooling "is a transaction—an exchange—intended to satisfy" the learners' needs for knowledge and skills.

The Marketing Concept

A philosophy of business which maintains that the satisfaction of consumers' needs is the only economic and social justification for an organization's existence.

The school belongs to society. People are educated in and for a given society. No society is a single or simple entity; each is a complicated product of change, of the historical adaptations of men and women to countless anthropological, cultural, political and other environmental changes and of the adverse and beneficial interactions of many different civilizations over the ages. The school is intimately involved with the course of society's evolution, mirroring the society of which it is but one of many interrelated institutions.

In the simple past, the older generations passed on to the young the knowledge, skills, modes of behavior and beliefs they needed to live as members of their community and fulfill the duties of their childhood and adult roles. In many practical ways the young were taught to cope with their environment—how to hunt, fish, prepare food, build a house, raise a family, how to speak the language and be a part of the culture. The educational system of those days, such as it was, served the needs of the society well. How well the school serves the needs of today's society is a much-debated question, one far from resolution. It is a measure of the agreement—or lack of agreement—about the kind of society the nation or individual community is trying to build. How well the school serves the needs of today's consumers resides in the still-to-come clarification of precisely what those needs are.

Selected Variables for School Market Analysis and Comparison

TARGETING

Search/Identification
Research/Investigation
Diagnosis/Testing
Observations
Testimonies/Referrals

PRIMARY MARKET: THE LEARNER

N E E D S !

PURPOSE (MISSION)

GOALS

OBJECTIVES

Mandates
Expectations
Perceptions
Demands
Research findings
Entry requirements

SEGMENTATION

Age	"Ability"
Early childhood	Regular
Elementary	Gifted
Middle school	Exceptional
Junior high school	Handicapped
Senior high school	Culturally different
Post high school	

MARKETING STRATEGY

PRODUCT

Differentiated Curricula

Academic
Vocational
Commercial
Comprehensive

Individualized and Personalized

Undifferentiated Curricula

e.g., Paideia

PROMOTION

Management information system

Networks

Public relations

PLACE

Sites
Times

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Management team
Resources:
Staff
Personnel
Financial base
Technology
Support

ADAPTATION TO CHANGE

Evaluation
Accreditation visits
Research
Innovation
De-obsolescence
Educational marketing audits

SECONDARY MARKET:

PUBLICS

Parents
Government agencies
Community groups
Voters/Taxpayers
Politicians
Post-high school educators
Employers
Special interest groups

MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Philosophy
Policies
Procedures

By far the most glaring distinction between the business enterprise and the educative enterprise of today is the philosophical acceptance by business that "our existence is rightfully dependent upon how well we satisfy the needs of our consumers." By contrast, American public schools have blithefully enjoyed a near-monopoly in educating the nation's children. Moreover they look forward to continued patronage and loyalty despite public dissatisfaction over serious failures to meet the presumed needs of public school pupils through the years. The growing numbers of nonpublic school options and relative decline in public school attendance call into question the economic and social justification of the institution (Brooks, 1982, p. 23).

Strategic Marketing Planning

> *The key to the organization's survival and success lies in . . . the definition of its purpose and goals, the determination of its target market and the selection of the marketing mix, the controllable variables that the firm combines to satisfy the targeted market.*

Purpose, Goals and Objectives—Very often schools and educational programs lack clearly defined purposes. A common criticism is that American public education lacks a sense of direction or mission. This lack of definition is generally ascribed to conflicts of values or lack of awareness on the part of the public, school leaders and policy makers of the real concerns of society and school. Allegedly, according to Grambs (1965, p. 174):

> *In too many instances neither the public nor the school leaders know what they really want. . . . When reading the news stories about schools, or the articles by school personnel, or when hearing their informal discussions, we are impressed with their lack of clarity regarding their own purposes and values, and with their lack of precision about what they do. . . . The public also lacks clarity about its basic value and goals.*

Historically the public school has tried to serve the range of perceived intellectual, social, emotional, vocational, moral, recreational and political-civic needs of all young people and of society as a whole. Under the guise of being responsive to the public, the school came to play an ineffectual role of panacea for all social ills, burdened with an ill-assorted proliferation of *ad hoc* goals and programs tacked on in response to a succession of societal crises.

For the school, strategic planning, which starts with an honest and definitive clarification of the important question, "What is our business?" would begin to establish the school's purpose and, by so doing, indicate the goals, and thence the programs, it is to concentrate on. The concentration decision is crucial. The basic strategy objectives derived from the definition of purpose become an action commitment. Integrity—adhering honestly to the school's purpose—is the bulwark against the multifarious pressure groups and the proliferation madness. Concentration decisions make possible the selection of key resources of personnel and materials while guiding the deselection of deadweight—obsolete, surplus or exhausted, resources. Tyler's rationale provided an early and enduring

blueprint for determining educational purposes, goals and objectives. To ensure clarity of purpose and appropriate decision making, the Tyler rationale (1949, chap. 1) posits three data sources: studies of the learners, studies of the contemporary life outside the school (society) and recommendations from subject specialists. Objectives stemming from this clarification of educational purpose should be consistent and limited to those realistically attainable by the school. They should be delimited by the school's operational philosophical and psychological screening processes and weighed against the available human and material resources of the school.

The needs data gathered from all sources provide insights to appropriate objectives that in turn are the necessary link between the school's purpose and programs. Needs identification is a straight forward and analytical process, although it can be demanding and time consuming. Need selection, prioritizing and consensus gathering are political processes that, while challenging the mettle and integrity of the educational leadership, determine whether identified needs lead to meaningful programs. Though the process can be stressful, it pays off in the long run with accurate knowledge and a good fit between learner needs and school offerings.

Target Market—In a marketing sense, the primary market of the public school is the nation's pool of school-aged young people of all races and ethnic groups, cultures and socioeconomic classes, whether intellectually and physically sound or handicapped, interested or disaffected, dropout or perfect attender. The public school inherits rather than selects its target market. This fact does not forgive the obligation to target the market, however, but makes more acute the need to identify and respond to the needs and motivations of these diverse learners effectively and efficiently.

The secondary market of the public school includes government (federal, state and local agencies), parents, community groups and local citizens and other publicly supported agencies (health, transportation, criminal justice, fire protection and safety). Each of these compete with public schools for funds.

Study of the market, primary and secondary, has to be an earnest and ongoing endeavor of the public education enterprise if it is to fulfill its responsibility. Critical information can be collected by common search-identification techniques, surveys gathering data by interviewing limited numbers or samples of persons using questionnaires, checklists or other standardized or specially prepared instruments, in person or by telephone or mail, observation and anecdotal reports, tests of various sorts and referrals from a variety of sources. Primary research (original, done specifically for the task at hand) may be carried out by qualified school personnel and/or a reliable external firm or agency.

It may be well to study secondary sources of information (already collected for some other purpose) for preliminary or supplementary data, since primary research tends to be both costly and time consuming though often more relevant in special circumstances. A useful secondary source of local demographic data is the Census Bureau's county and city data book. Others worth investigating but often overlooked are state and local government documents, the reports of public relations, advertising media and private business firms, university and private research foundations and library holdings of various private and public institutions.

Marketing Mix—Theoretically the basic elements of the public school marketing mix could be described as:

- product: the assortment of programs that the school offers, including curricular and extracurricular experiences
- price: psychological and scholastic expectations, intellectual and ability levels, prerequisites and time commitments, test scores and skills achievement levels, hours of homework, restrictions and so forth
- promotion: school publications of all sorts, public information and public relations activities, such as, back-to-school nights, public school weeks, school marquees, meetings, news releases, in short, every activity or encounter that brings school events or school people in touch with the public
- place: school sites, school boundaries, open-closed campuses, attendance zones, time tables, extended day schedules and so forth.

For decades American public schools have tended to "segment" the school population on the bases of age and so-called ability. Strongly held opinion in support of or opposed to traditional segmentation strategies surfaces periodically along with periodic reform-the-public-school movements. A recent national reform movement, for example, is the Paideia Proposal to establish a uniform, one-track curriculum for all throughout the public school grades (Adler, 1982). It calls for the elimination of many things that "now clutter up the school day." If adopted by a school, "segmentation" under the proposal would involve adapting the basic program (basic product) in a variety of ways (multiple programs) suitable to the diverse circumstances of different schools or school systems.

Promotional activities of business firms are regulated by government agencies and false, misleading or deceptive advertising is prohibited. Many public school professionals recognize no such constraints and, with the best of intentions, have tarnished the promotional system of public schools. School public relations persons, for example, have embarked on "selling" the schools. This has often meant telling about successes and "cute things" while covering up failures and problems, or at least describing things in ways that suggest that problems do not exist. School promotion should never degenerate into a manipulative selling activity but rather should entail a conscientious, comprehensive communications program. Underlying it should be a management information system concerned with data gathering, interactions at various levels and among various groups, data processing, decision making and information dissemination on the broadest possible scale. Ideally the system should be built on integrity, sensitivity and the personal commitment of the school's leadership to promote the best interests of the school by building a broad-based and enlightened constituency.

Management of Change, Research and Evaluation

> *To remain viable an organization must regularly reassess its basic purpose and target market and, where indicated, reorient its marketing strategy to achieve optimal marketing effectiveness.*

A Stephen Leacock story had a hero who "jumped on his horse and rode madly off—in every direction, at once." Often, such has seemed the response of

public school people to the legions of critics over the years. In marketing, a guiding principle for reform is the simple caution, "Profitable product policies emerge from consideration of the consumer in the overall social and economic environment." In practical terms, what does this mean? What implications does it have for public school program policies? A comparison can be illuminating.

The initial impetus for reorienting product policies in a business firm might stem from the marketing audit. Or, given top management that encourages innovation, new product ideas are accepted from consumers, employees, government agencies, research organizations or other sources. Steps leading to product innovation could include (but are not necessarily limited to) the following:

1) screening ideas to determine whether further study is warranted
2) concept analysis involving:
   a) identification of product features
   b) assessment of market demand and potential profitability
   c) progressive program planning for the product and assignment of responsibilities for various aspects of product development
3) limited production or production of pilot model
4) test marketing in limited geographic sectors to evaluate product features, alternative marketing strategies and feasibility of full-scale marketing
5) final decisions on whether to launch the innovation, based on specific criteria for the product, such as:
   a) compatibility with the company's self-concept, purpose and objectives
   b) adequate market demand
   c) compatibility with environmental, legal and social standards
   d) good fit within constraints of the company's existing production facilities, manpower and management and marketing systems or within the range of feasible modifications
   e) financial soundness (cost effective and profitable).

A similar process could characterize the adoption and implementation of the successful educational innovation. Consider, for example, the possibility of a school's adopting the Paideia Proposal. What considerations should underlie a decision for such an adoption? A school board and school management that encourage innovation could respond to recommendations for adoption from interested students, teachers, parents or other publics in some of the following ways based on the marketing concept:

1) screening process to determine whether further study and recommendations are warranted: Is the reputation of the Paideia group of significance in weighing the relative merits and relevance of the proposal for the school?
2) concept analysis involving representative input of all affected groups and influentials (publics), such as students, teachers, post-high school educators, employers, state department of education and so forth to:
   a) examine features of the proposed basic program
   b) assess "market" demand: How compatible is it with the school's student population and publics? How congruent with their expectations, interests and desires?

c) constitute committees to conduct various preliminary studies and activities such as public relations, curriculum revision, higher education requisites study, vocational/technical/military entry-level requirements and opinion surveys of selected primary and secondary market segments

3) development and/or adaptation of specific content, instructional materials and methods by interested curriculum teams

4) pilot study, a valuable and necessary step to allow evaluation of the program with a sample target population, study its features from the perspective of students and practitioners immediately affected by the innovation and develop and improve teaching strategies that are faithful to the philosophy of the proposal; the period could also profitably be employed in the design and implementation of appropriate staff development programs (Bishop, 1976)

5) final decisions on whether to adopt the proposal weighed against the criteria of:

a) compatibility with the school's definition of purpose, its goals and objectives, educational philosophy and professed psychology of learning

b) compatibility with the identified needs, interests and learning styles of the target population, and acquiescence of significant publics, considering also the effects on existing programs, especially such popular activities as athletics

c) compliance with state and local board mandates and satisfaction of entry-level requirements of major recipient colleges, universities, trade schools or employers

d) adequate resources, especially professionally competent instructional staff to modify curricula and teach within the proposed framework and qualified administrators to manage new logistical requirements while providing the quality of educational leadership demanded by the proposal

e) appropriation of funds to permit the necessary program modifications.

Summary

Whether "strategic marketing" or simply "strategic educational" planning is the motivating force, the marketing concept can become a powerful tool in the management repertoire of enlightened public school administrators. It does not require or even suggest that the school be managed as a business concern. It does require a school management reorientation and commitment to the philosophy that holds that the social and economic justification for the school's existence is the accurate identification of the real world needs of its student population and the effective and efficient satisfaction of those needs.

The power tool is strategic marketing, that is, the definition of clear purpose and goals, arrived at by consensus among those immediately concerned. It involves targeting of the market: obtaining up-to-date, verifiable, unchallengeable information that identifies the realities, values, interests and needs of the particular student population. It develops an educational program tailor-made to satisfy identified needs are measured against the unique competence of the school.

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Part Two
Marketing Techniques

4

Community Analysis Techniques: An Anthropologist's Perspective

Robert L. Rotenberg

PERHAPS no term in the social sciences is subject to more confusion and ambiguity than the term "community." The history of this concept is closely associated with writings that reflect the horrors of industrial urban life and a desire to return to a more ordered and calm social experience. This was the meaning underlying the work of Ferdinand Tonnies in the late 19th century, when the distinction between community and society was first made. Today the term "community" is widely used in a more technical and less idealistic sense, suggesting a group of people involved in a discrete set of social relationships that can solve locally important problems. There are two important ideas involved in this definition: social relationships and locality. Before we can proceed with how communities can be analyzed, these ideas need to be highlighted.

Social Relationships—All of society is built upon relationships that people have with one another. Communities, as an aspect of social life, are no exception. Not all social relationships are equally meaningful or powerful, however. There is a difference, for example, between the relationship I have with the person I buy the newspaper from every morning and the person who lives next door, whose children play with my children and with whom I go camping every summer. In the former case, only one kind of activity defines the relationship. In the latter case, there are many different activities. Relationships are based on either simple or multiple ties.

Communities are built up through networks of people engaged in multiple ties with each other. The multiple ties provide many opportunities for people to interact with each other. Through this interaction, people learn to care about each other's lives. The networks ensure that important information will be widely known and the caring interest widely distributed. It is this deep involvement in each other's lives and the ease with which information can be passed that imbues community life with its problem-solving power.

Localities—Society exists only in the abstract. In concrete terms, people live

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their lives in specific places and solve problems that arise locally. The use of the telephone has made it possible for people who have multiple ties, but live in scattered locations, to maintain their networks. But this is not a community in the strict sense. In the kinds of communities we are concerned with here, joint recognition of a common problem and the desire to enter into cooperative action to solve it are part of the multiple ties that define social relationships. Those social networks that have a clear identification with a locality and monitor the problems that face them locally are known as *vital* communities. Those that can mobilize themselves to solve the problems are known as *competent* communities. The evaluation of a community consists of determining the extent of its vitality and competence, oftentimes in the absence of any pressing current problems.

The key to any community analysis is understanding how the community in question defines its locality. Since communities are built up from social relationships, there is no reason why they should define their locality in the same fashion as administrative or political institutions. Communities may overlap district or ward boundaries. They may cut across ethnic or class lines. They may even be nonspatial, as when a local tax increase separates a locality into two communities—those favoring and those opposing. In this case the community boundary may exclude every other house on a street. Because the community's identification of what, precisely, constitutes its locality is so variable, that identification must be a part of a definition of a real-life community.

Community Stability—The community is a discrete set of social relationships that can be mobilized to solve locally important problems. This set of relationships is bounded in time. Just as it is important to understand the community's identification of the locality, it is also necessary to understand the community's history, development and change through time. Individuals and their households change. As we grow older, the nature of the problems we face changes. Households move relatively often, losing their immediate ties in their former locality and acquiring new ones in the community. Even the composition of households change as children are born, grow and leave; this, too, changes the way in which a household identifies its locality and the problems it faces. As with individuals and households, the discrete set of social relationships of networks and community life is also in a state of constant flux.

To understand a community, we must think in terms of processes through which communities form and dissolve and *not* in terms of things that always remain the same. A community, then, is a discrete set of *developing* social relationships among people that can be mobilized to solve locally identified problems.

Strategies for Analyzing Communities

With community analysis we deal with highly fluid social relationships among people who share some sense of their locality that we cannot define ahead of time. This is hardly the kind of social research that lends itself to a single research strategy valid in every instance. Communities change, disappear and transform themselves even as we try to describe them. In order to deal with such difficult social occurrences, we need to employ the most sensitive and flexible of research strategies—participant/observation.

Participant/observation refers to a set of data-gathering techniques employed by cultural anthropologists, and to a lesser extent by sociologists, to gain the

most highly detailed information on the inner workings of a group of people. Simply put, the investigators insert themselves into the life of the group, working alongside the people in the group, enjoying their recreations with them, sharing their homes and meals, listening to them deal with their conflicts and problems and speculating with them about how their world works. It is a very time-consuming and emotionally-draining research commitment.

There are techniques that have been developed as a result of such field experiences, however, that enable people who are already members of a group to collect information about the communities around them. These techniques constitute the strategies for assembling sufficient information to evaluate the vitality and competence of communities.

Sources of Information—The primary mechanism that drives communities is the information network. Members of the community are in constant contact with each other through meetings, telephone conversations and organized events. The network may use newspapers or other media to disseminate information important to its members. Some more formally structured communities may actually print their own newsletters. Tapping into this flow of information provides the community analyst with three kinds of information about the community:

1. The content of the news explains a great deal about the immediate concerns of the community. This may include both problem-oriented concerns requiring mobilization of community members' efforts or "phatic" concerns, the need for community members to remain in closer touch with each other and develop more joint activities to strengthen their ties.

2. The distribution of the news describes the limits of the network and the membership in the community. Those who have heard the news, paid attention to it and openly acknowledge knowing it are clearly responding to their primary responsibility as community members: to pay attention to the lives of other members and to care about what happens to them.

3. The form of the information is also important. Different kinds of information are exchanged through the network, including factual information about meeting times, hearings, demonstrations and deadlines; semifactual information about the "facts" behind a conflict or hearsay quotations from perceived antagonists; and value information, such as gossip and reputation mongering about personalities in an effort either to separate them further or to draw them nearer to the value orientation of the community.

Information flowing through the community network is the most valuable source of data about how the community identifies itself, what it considers to be the major problems it faces and what its values and goals are. The information flow is also central to understanding changes in the community since conflicts, apathy and dissension will appear there first, before these changes appear in the public forums.

Informants—Short of being a member of the community oneself and, therefore, tied into these information networks, the next most successful technique for gaining access to the flow of information is the use of informants. Although this word has an unfortunate connotation of "tattler" and "stool pigeon," anthro-

pologists use it to describe individuals who recognize the need to explain their communities to outsiders as a way of justifying community actions and gaining additional points of view.

The best informants are people who are deeply involved in the information network of the community and sometimes act as leaders. These individuals are likely to have the most complete knowledge of the network information. Successful informants are also those people with whom the investigator has been able to establish an honest and caring rapport. Any investigator who cannot identify with the community's goals even to the point of establishing friendships with its leaders will never gain enough information to evaluate the community adequately or accurately.

Schools that employ aides from the same locations as they draw students have in these aides a rich resource of information about the community, but there is no formal way to milk that information. Informal relationships based on sincere concern and mutual respect are far more efficient and reliable than pressure. Similarly, parents' associations are extremely rich sources of information about the inner workings of the various communities from which the school draws its students. Here, too, concern for community perceptions and respect for differing points of view are the most effective stance for gaining information.

Institutions—An institution is a relatively permanent set of social relations based on the organized response to enduring problems, such as educating children, furnishing work, administering public works or providing religious services. Institutions are different from communities not only because they are relatively permanent features of the society but because their jurisdictions and locality are highly stable. Institutions are also empowered to manage parts of the entire society's resources, such as buildings, libraries, tax monies, children or public events and ceremonies. Because of their power and permanence, communities use institutions in a number of ways. Sometimes the institutions provide part of the solution to a community problem, such as a place to meet, a way of producing a cheap newsletter or an activity that community members can share in common. Institutions can also be part of the problem that communities members are struggling with—insensitive administrators, insufficient resources for community needs or conflict between communities for access to institutional resources.

Because of the frequent reliance of communities on institutions, the leaders of the institutions are often well positioned to provide additional information on community processes. An interesting technique for understanding communities through the information available to institutional leaders is known as the Delphi technique. Quite simply, it involves getting the institutional leaders to predict the outcome of a particular conflict. When a large number of these responses are then compared, the areas in which people agree or disagree in the course of the conflict can be descriptive of unrecognized strengths or weaknesses within the community and among their antagonists. The Delphi technique is a simple strategy that ought to be used more often in community assessment. It can be made even more powerful by adding community leaders and their antagonists to the sample.

In addition to institutions, there are other arenas in the life of a community that establish ties between people. A bowling alley, tavern, park or beach, coffee shop, political organization, service club, hobby group, athletic club or country

club are all examples of arenas that fall short of the notion of institution but are permanent enough to serve the particular needs of communities. Since each represents an opportunity for people to meet and exchange information that crosscuts households, they are places in which the pulse of the community can be taken. Once again the outside investigator would want slowly to become known in such places; the insider would more simply want to know someone who "belonged" there and who was willing to share the information being passed.

Creating a Community File—Successful community analysis begins with the community file. This is a collection of information about the communities operating within a district. It includes the members of the community or, if the community is large, the general characteristics of the members. It includes the community's local identification, together with the institutions and crosscutting arenas that the community members use, It includes the names and telephone numbers of the most prominent community leaders as well as the leaders of the institutions and crosscutting arenas. It includes newspaper or newsletter clippings of community activities and transcripts or recordings of radio and television discussions involving community leaders or issues. It includes written accounts of how communities dealt with issues in the past together with complete descriptions of the nature of the issue and the sequence of events that constituted the community's response. It may also include Delphi predictions by institutional leaders as to the outcome of the issue. It includes information collected on an infrequent basis from informants about changes in the membership of the community, changes in community values, conflicts within the community and recent communitywide events through which social relationships are reinforced.

All of this may seem like a lot of work. For the outsider starting a community analysis from scratch, it *is* a lot of work. For the insider, memory provides a sizable amount of preliminary information for the file. After that it is only a matter of establishing one's own information network and keeping the files up to date.

Dimensions of Analysis

Once a reasonable amount of information has been assembled on the community's location, leadership, information network and institutional support, analysis can begin. The goal of community analysis is to refine one's understanding of the community's organization. This procedure should answer the question, Is this, in fact, a community? There is no easy answer as to how much information is necessary before one can begin to ask that question. At the very least the analyst should feel that there is information about location, leadership, networks and institutional support before proceeding.

The effort to analyze this information is not an end in itself. Once we are confident that we are dealing with a community, we can begin to evaluate it; that is, we can begin to ask how effective this community is at solving problems. These issues will be dealt with in the following section on evaluation. The analysis of a community involves four dimensions—autonomy, clarity of boundaries, psychological identification with the locality and horizontal integration (Warren, 1963, p. 13). Each of these dimensions will now be discussed.

Autonomy—The dimension of autonomy refers to the relative independence of the community from outside forces as it provides its members with opportunities for social participation and social support. To assess whether the community is autonomous, look at its reliance on outsiders to bring focus to its activities, its

use of persons in positions of authority or power to make its desires felt and the extent to which community goals change in response to pressure from influences outside the locality. The real community is always a mixture of dependence on and independence from outside forces. That is why autonomy is discussed as a dimension rather than a category. Communities that lie closer to the dependent side of the dimension are vulnerable to manipulation and to dissolution through conflicts between the outsider-oriented members and the locality-oriented members. Communities that lie closer to the independent side of the dimension are less open to conflict and manipulation but are too often threatened by declining resources to ensure participation and support.

Clarity of Boundaries—The clarity of boundaries dimension refers to the degree of overlap between the residences of the community members and their institutions. To assess whether clarity of boundaries exists in the community, look at a map and decide whether the areas served by the support institutions (schools, churches, municipalities, clubs etc.) coincide with each other. The real community is a mixture of coinciding boundaries and noncoinciding boundaries. Communities that lie toward the end representing a high degree of overlap tend to be more permanent because there are increased opportunities for community members to interact with each other as they take advantage of the full set of institutional services in their locality. Those communities that lie toward the "low overlap" end of the dimension will, on the other hand, tend to disintegrate over time as individuals move away from each other to take advantage of noncoinciding services.

Psychological Identification with the Locality—The psychological identification dimension refers to the way community members think about the community. Is it a significant dimension for talking about their immediate social world? Or is it merely an unnamed association of people addressing a problem on an *ad hoc* basis with little intention of continuing their association when the problem is solved? The degree to which people take the trouble to name their groupings, or refer to them in conversation as groups and not collections of individuals, tells us about the commitment people make in their own minds to the community. To assess the psychological identification of people with the community, listen to how they refer to the community and their relation to it. Real communities will be composed both of people with strong senses of identification and of people with weaker ones. Those communities with a large portion of psychologically identifying members can rely on greater degrees of effort for and commitment to the community's problems than those with a preponderance of members expressing a weaker form of identification.

Horizontal Integration—The horizontal integration dimension refers to the extent that a strong, interconnecting relationship exists between different segments of the same large community. Are there strong sentiments, value orientations and behavior patterns that link individuals together in spite of their affiliations to various religious, ethnic or voluntary associations? The degree to which interconnecting relationships exist within the community is an excellent measure of the community's base of support, and hence its stability. To assess the horizontal integration of a community, listen to how people mix their identifications. At meetings arranged to solve specific problems, do speakers tend to identify themselves as representatives of other associations or institutional groupings? Do speakers make reference to their neighborhoods, ethnicity or religion

when they address an issue? Are people identified by the conveners as representatives of specific groups? In real communities, horizontal integration is never complete; some groupings will be excluded and feel themselves outside of the community process, if not in open opposition to it. Those communities in which the horizontal integration is high have a strong, stable base of support that can be mobilized to deal with a variety of problems. Those with a low level of horizontal integration lack broad support, are exposed to conflict with competing groups and are less effective in solving problems.

Evaluating Community Patterns

When one knows how autonomous the community is, how much spatial overlap exists within the institutions serving the community, the degree of psychological identification people maintain with the community and the extent of horizontal integration between associations within the community, it is then possible to begin to predict how the community will perform under different conditions. This is known as the evaluation of community patterns. It tells us how effective communities are in dealing with their problems. Community evaluation consists of asking two different by related questions: What evidence exists of the community's stability, or *vitality*? What evidence exists for the community's effectiveness, or *competence*?

Evaluating Vitality—In a sense, community vitality is something that has been discussed throughout this chapter. There is a notion that there are "good" or "healthy" communities and "bad" or "pathological" ones. The term "vital" tries to avoid some of the unfortunate connotations of these terms for describing a community in which people actively solve problems. Vitality refers quite literally to a community that is alive, functioning and available for its members. The dimensions of analysis discussed in the previous section all refer to the structural framework of community life. Vitality refers to its everyday functioning. One of the best ways of understanding community vitality is to contrast it with nonvital communities. Bowles (1981) provides a list of contrasts between the two. See page 57.

Although this list is somewhat jargon filled, it does provide a clear summary of how the structural features of a community create or fail to create the basis for effective community action. Horizontal integration provides for frequent and popular collective events. Overlapping boundaries provide opportunities to acquire services and psychological support from social networks. Autonomy suggests the persistence of ineffective internal organization. And psychological identification ensures that the community can respond to a problem and will see the effects of the problem as collective as well as individual.

This list of characteristics of the vital and nonvital community can be used by the analyst to evaluate the information about the community's functioning that is accumulating in the community file. As the analyst becomes attuned to watching for instances of the community's actions, he or she can immediately score it as vital or nonvital. Bear in mind that nonvital scores are often the result of inaction. This means that the analyst must be able to see the potential for community action that does not, in fact, happen. The key to assessment lies in keeping careful track of the problems facing the community.

In urban societies many problems that face a community are dealt with by

governmental units or administrations as a service to taxpayers. A community that relies entirely on such external units to solve its problems is tending toward the nonvital. Such communities will not have prior experience of joint action on a problem should the external units fail to meet community needs. In fact, for most urban societies, nonvital responses to problems are the rule, and clear expressions of community relatively rare. (See Warren, 1963, for a full discussion of this idea.)

Evaluating Competence—The idea of community competence derives from the work of Cottrell (1977, p. 548), who provides the classic definition of competence:

> *A competent community is here conceived as one in which the various component parts of the community: (1) are able to collaborate effectively in identifying the problems and needs of the community; (2) can achieve a working consensus on goals and priorities; (3) can agree on ways and means to implement the agreed upon goals; and (4) can collaborate effectively on the required actions. It is proposed here that a community that can provide the conditions and generate the capabilities required to meet the above performance tests will be competent to cope with the problems of its collective life.*

The attainment of competence by a community is no easy matter. In the first place, there must be a clear and genuine commitment of people to the community. Cottrell believes that this kind of commitment can only come about when people have strong psychological identification with the community, when they feel they have a recognized significant role in it and when they see positive results from either past or present participation. In the second place, competence depends on the articulateness and communication skills of its members. Each segment of the community needs to be able to identify its own relationship to the problem, relate this to other segments and communicate its position so that other segments will understand. Finally competence is the rejection of isolationism. The community must be able to adapt to the conditions in which it finds itself. This includes learning how to use the resources of the wider social system, such as experts and specialists, without being controlled by them (1977, p. 555). The checklist on page 58 summarizes Cottrell's points.

The community that has the capacity to act collectively and respond constructively can more effectively protect itself from both internal problems and external threats. It ensures its own stability and reinforces its identification with a locality. Community competence is the most powerful predictor of future community responses. For this reason, it is the most powerful tool in the community analyst's tool kit. Its power comes from the fact that the analyst has gone through all of the steps previously discussed to acquire information about the community, analyze its structural features and evaluate its vitality. Only after the analyst knows the community that well, can the evaluation of community competence proceed.

The time to evaluate community competence is when the community is preparing to deal with a problem. Only then are the important elements of local identification and stability sufficiently well defined to allow the analyst to reach for more finely tuned aspects of the evaluation, such as variation among seg-

mem/s within the community, communication skills of apparent leaders and level of psychological identification. Like all other aspects of communities, the level of competence can change as the underlying conditions of community change. For this reason, competence must be evaluated afresh for each problem.

Community Analysis and the School District

A community's schools are among its most important institutional supports. For that reason, the problems facing public schools in the 1980s—such as declining enrollments, budgetary cutbacks and the perception of unmet educational needs—are as much community problems as they are problems for school administrators. The procedures outlined above should provide the concerned school district administrator with the conceptual and practical tools for understanding the extent to which the community is already an ally in the problem-solving process. It should also indicate how strong that community is, how willing it might be to take on a share of responsibilities for finding solutions and its competence to attempt such efforts.

As community organizers know, there is nothing more frustrating than trying to create community where none exists. School administrators are in a different position. By virtue of the institutions they lead, they already have access to the germ of a community. This procedure for analyzing communities should provide the administrator with a clear and unambiguous picture of where the strengths and weaknesses of the school's community lie. It is a baseline from which further efforts for assessing needs and improving relations with the community can proceed.

The procedures outlined here do not require that hours of efforts be put into the analysis. Most of the information required by these procedures can be gleaned through effective listening and devoted involvement in the real life of the community the school district serves, aspects of administration that should already be familiar to the administrator. What these procedures provide is the order in which the information needs to be sifted and the criteria for evaluating the community's features.

Socially Vital Communities	**Social Nonvital Communities**
many collective events	*few collective events*
high levels of participation in collective events	*low levels of participation in collective events*
many collective events internally organized and controlled	*most collective events externally organized and controlled*
many services provided or acquired through internal and informal networks	*very few services acquired or provided through informal social networks*
informal social networks invoked in times of stress and times of joy	*informal social networks not invoked in times of stress or joy*
very few members socially isolated from other members of the community	*many members social isolated from other members of the community, though they may have external contacts*
persisting structures of internal governance	*no persisting structures of internal governance*
capable of organizing to respond to an imposed or impacting event	*not capable of organizing to respond to an impacting event (though may be able to respond to threat)*
most members conceptualize impacting events in terms of impact on the collectivity as well as impact on them personally	*most members conceptualize events in terms of impact on them personally but not in terms of impact on the collectivity*

Competent Community	Noncompetent Community
collaborates on identifying problems and needs	*unable to identify problems or needs*
establishes consensus on goals and priorities	*cannot establish consensus on goals and priorities*
can agree on strategy for meeting agreed upon goals	*cannot forge a common strategy for meeting goals*
collaborates effectively on required actions	*unable to effectively mount required actions*
strong psychological identification	*weak psychological identification*
individuals play significant roles	*individuals excluded form significant roles*
past record of positive results	*no record of positive results or record of past failures*
members possess effective communication skills	*members do not possess effective communication skills*
effectively uses outside expertise, while retaining control and direction over efforts	*relinquishes control and direction over efforts to outside expertise*

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5

Needs Assessment: A Management Tool in Marketing a Program

Maurice J. Eash

THE USE of needs assessments as a foundation for program and project design is a recent phenomenon. Programs have usually been developed around some needs that recipients of a service or participants in an activity are assumed to have. For example, a program to train teachers for urban schools and induce them into urban school systems through incentives might be set up by an urban school system unable to hire sufficient teachers to meet the classroom demand in all subject areas on the opening day. But the need is assumed, not proven. It is derived from apparent incongruities in unmet service demands and existing human or material resources imbalances. As a result a program intervention was thought to be desirable.

Unfortunately, as in many other social phenomenon, the causal events are not linear. The obvious manifestations of a problem are often only symptoms, and the planned intervention brings only further expense, greater complication and distress to an already troubled situation. In the example, alleviation of a shortage of teachers may not bring improvement in education, especially if there is no change in the delivery of the teaching. Poor recruitment, lowered standards of entry into the profession, negative attitudes and emphasis on a few elite children may attenuate the original good intention and produce results that in subsequent evaluation demonstrate no change in the educational services provided to students in the urban area. To continue this hypothetical example, a program evaluation might raise a cry that the several-million-dollar project be nominated for the Golden Fleece Award, a singularly unsought honor.

Because of unanticipated outcomes like these, needs assessment has emerged as a project design tool that is widely recommended and increasingly used prior to marketing a program. But a review of the literature indicates that there has been little discussion of needs assessment methodology, in sharp contrast to the admonitions, chiefly from federal and state governments, that a needs assessment be undertaken as a condition for program application. In addition, needs assessments do not often utilize systematic, formal methodology. They are as prone to mislead decisions in resource allocation and use in the design of projects

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as are approaches based primarily on selective experience or conventional wisdom. The purpose of this chapter is to examine needs assessment methodologies, their strengths and weaknesses, their biases and utilities, as a management tool in marketing a program.

The increasing politicization of the human service area, education included, has made both education professionals and government officials wary of imposing a framework of service on program residents and students, despite the appearance of obvious need. Educational programs are heavy consumers of manpower and become major job sources. Laymen, as well as politicians, can become as concerned about the distribution of jobs created as they are about the services delivered. If services and programs are to serve their target population, successful strategies for dealing with competing interest groups, be they lay or professional, are needed. Needs assessment techniques are giving attention to these problem areas, and they are being heavily relied on for project design that avoid the thickets of the special interest politics and penetrate the symptoms that obscure the underlying force or condition from which the need arises.

The literature evaluating needs assessment methodology is fragmented and, while it recognizes the validity of the concept, it is short on suggestions. In most evaluation textbooks needs assessment methodology is given little or no attention, and a survey of studies on needs assessment, as well as the recommended methodology emerging from granting agencies, reveals glaring methodological defects. For example, in discussions with the head of a large federal agency that dispenses millions of dollars for teacher training projects and emphasizes needs assessment as the opening step in designing a project, the question was raised of cost and time in conducting a required needs assessment within the constraints of the deadlines. The official's definition of what constituted an adequate needs assessment was disarmingly easy to conduct but appallingly primitive as a methodology if invoked as a serious attempt to protect an investigator against future error. "Just get a few teachers together informally and ask them what a teacher training program needs," he said. Then he cheerfully volunteered to let me read a few of the needs assessments that had been submitted with previous proposals so I would understand the process. It was clear that this bureaucrat was satisfying a requirement that a political process be conducted without much concern that the program design step of needs assessment function as other than a formality. If needs assessments are to serve program designs, keep us from misallocating resources to services that do not meet needs and skirt the political pitfalls in the path of most agencies that render services to a broad public, then attention must be given, as in any creditable evaluation research, to providing the project designer with a needs assessment that is based on reliable and valid data. These two standbys of all research—reliability and validity—can be ensured in needs assessment by observing some standard methodological techniques.

Defining Needs Assessment

For the purposes of this paper, a need is defined as a lack or imbalance between what exists and what is desired. The imbalance may or may not be perceived by the individual or group in which the need is manifest.

Needs assessment does not have an agreed upon definition in the literature, but definitions are not hard to come by. For our purposes the following—a com-

posite developed from several sources—will suffice. A needs assessment is the attempt to draw some specification for a program, usually of services, based upon:

1) a desired level of activities, programs, resources, services and outcomes
2) an existing level of these activities, programs, resources, services or desired outcomes as they relate to a specific population or setting.

In the final analysis, the decisions on what needs are to be met and their order of priority is a matter of judgment. Judgments based on data systematically gathered from the recipient population or setting are more readily defended and accepted than those that are perceived to be arbitrary in selection and authoritarian in imposition.

Without improved data on needs, reactions to the marketing of a program are not readily predictable. Unpredictability of client response to program change is a major deterrent to undertaking program improvement, for few administrations ever learn to endure gracefully the long-term hostility engendered as an unanticipated consequence of aggressive program marketing.

The gathering of data to determine needs, their strengths and priorities in program planning and design, is a task that requires mastery of research methods. The methodologies for assessing needs are basically derived from evaluation research approaches that are borrowed from the research design catalogs of the social and behavioral sciences.

Common Errors

The needs assessment literature consulted for this chapter revealed a woeful lack of attention to design rigor. Consequently findings were open to investigator bias, confounded results and the myriad of design errors that entrap field research. A review of needs assessment studies in the literature finds that common errors can be classified, for ease of discussion, into six categories. These categories will be used to present examples of common errors and suggested design and methodological considerations that will help prevent the errors found in existing needs assessments.

Population Sampling—Probably one of the most critical but common errors in needs assessment is for the investigation to ignore population sampling on a systematic basis. Typically the population samples used in a needs assessment are simply those that are available, easy to reach and cooperative. Correlative with an unsystematic approach to obtaining the sample of respondents is a lack of information on characteristics of the respondents that might help in evaluating the breadth, range and representativeness of the sample. Population characteristics of age, sex, educational background and experience in the area of the need under study frame the data for interpretation. Very seldom can all potential recipients of the planned service be included in the needs assessment. Thus population sampling becomes an early issue, but despite its importance in producing findings in which one can have confidence, it is one of the most slighted components of current needs assessments. Forethought in population sampling can also reduce the cost of a needs assessment, as it may reduce the number of interviews to be conducted or limit the number of questionnaires to be gathered.

Sudman (1976) and Cockran (1977) authoritatively discuss the techniques of sampling, so I will not deal with the general issue here but will confine myself to one observation. From experience in conducting field studies of needs assessment, I know that one of the primary reasons the investigator ignores population sampling is that he or she has no clear idea of the nature of the need at the outset of the investigation. In some cases this can be corrected by the time-honored research approach of building careful definitions of a need prior to constructing the instrument and collecting the data. To get a firm grasp of the conceptual structure of the need, an investigator does some open-ended interviewing with a small but carefully selected sample that represents specifically the cognoscente or those with outstanding manifestations of the need. The findings from this preliminary sample can then be used to determine the population(s) to be sampled, and the investigator's blindness to potential service populations is thereby prevented.

In sum, the question in population sampling, which the needs assessment investigator always addresses, is whether the population surveyed can be deemed representative of those who will be the target of the proposed program to be marketed.

Instrumentation—The most common instruments used in gathering needs assessment data are questionnaires and interviews. I shall not deal with the specific construction techniques here, for Leege and Francis (1974) and Kahn and Cannell (1957) contain references on the basics of assembling these instruments. Once assembled, instruments should always be field tested for the usual checks on reliability and validity before they are used in a needs assessment survey. Gross errors have been found in needs assessment where instrumentation was precast and failed to obtain data that provided information on the characteristics or prevalence of the need. Usually this error is made when the investigator uses an instrument with close-ended responses in order to achieve efficiency through collection of precoded units and employment of a less highly trained staff in data collection. Respondent data in these cases reflect the biases of the investigator more than the needs of the client or setting. While instruments in needs assessment may be more open-ended, especially in identifying the conceptual boundaries of the need, there is great danger of error in obtaining reliable and valid findings if the usual cautions of the standard references on instrument building are ignored. These cautions include avoiding biases in the questions through telegraphing responses, incorporating response set, exceeding the information of the respondents and cutting off respondent self-generated information.

Data Collection and Time Sample—Needs assessments are usually conducted under time constraints; therefore, data are more vulnerable to time sample errors that may be the result of other events concurrent with data collection (Campbell and Stanley, 1966; Nelson, 1973). For example, if one were conducting a needs assessment on curriculum needs in local schools today, undoubtedly the data collected on emphasis in curriculum would reflect the respondents' heightened awareness resulting from recent reports on the quality of curriculum and the need for excellence if schools are to be in tune with national policy. Crosscurrents of national events frequently coincide with data collecting and must be taken into account. If the outside influence is very great and strong distortion is suspected because of some event that has heightened public awareness, data collection

using different time samples will allow an investigator to adjust for the influence of the external event.

As in any investigation, well-trained data collectors are essential. Because of the informal methods used in surveying populations that require interviewers who resemble the respondents, investigators often use untrained field data collectors. Needs assessment that goes this route is suspect in its findings. It has been observed in studies for which minority and working-class interviewers were used that a few hours of training have paid off handsomely in the quantity and quality of data returned. Coincidentally, the experiences of local interviewers in data collecting can be very educative and build future support for the project. In a recent study in which minority interviewers were used to conduct parent interviews in the poorest section of a large city, collectors were able to obtain a 100-percent response of the random sample from a population for which trained professionals would have had difficulty getting even a small percentage of the front doors open.

Misidentified Variates and Variables—Needs may be latent, as well as manifest, in the population that is under assessment (Roosi, Freeman, and Wright, 1979). There are several courses a trained researcher can take to ferret out an accurate picture of the needs. It is common to use key informants to save time, and if informants are selected because they have superior knowledge of the needs, the problem or misidentifying variates and variables can be surmounted. It is not unusual, however, for key informants to have vested interests in shaping the needs assessments, especially if significant program funds are at stake. A standard method for uncovering these biases is to pretest instruments and run preliminary data by experts to see if the actual needs are being assessed or if symptoms are being confused for causal variates or variables. These concerns are especially significant where subtle factors overlie and complicate the interpretation of events. As an illustration, the annual survey of teacher concerns reveals that a large percentage cite discipline as the number one problem of teachers. Additional in-depth studies find that discipline often is a symptom of other underlying needs and is not a variate or variable that is consistent with and subject to explication as a unitary phenomenon. Thus, treated as a causal variable, it precludes taking the direct remedial action that seems called for in the survey finding.

Conceptual analysis of the area to be assessed and identification of the key assumptions are vital in avoiding the error of misidentification. Felt needs are almost always reticulated with other attitudes and social values. Using experts to check the approaches, instruments and preliminary data returns is a technique that can provide protection for the findings of the study. Probing of respondents' reasons for answers also aids in separating descriptions from causality.

Data Analysis—Needs assessments commonly use descriptive data and analyze it qualitatively or with descriptive statistics. Though frequently rich in character, much of the data is lost because it was not subjected to a more rigorous analysis using different variables to cast data into new patterns of meaning. A frequent error is failure to collect information on individual variables, individual experience in the area of need and other personal characteristics. My belief is that lack of analysis of data results is as great a problem in the needs assessment studies as is the gathering of insufficient data. To expedite data analysis, it is advisable to set up the data-gathering instruments in such a way that responses

can be entered directly into an on-line computer terminal. The instrument's analytical units must be set up to ease coding requirements for computer input. This means that computer input should not load the operator with decisions as to the data categories and their meanings. There are good, sound and sophisticated data techniques that could add new dimensions to our needs assessment studies and break the lock on the descriptive approaches now so commonplace (Kerlinger, 1973; Draper and Smith, 1966). To be able to use these approaches, preplanning of the assessment must include data analysis as well as the identification of population and the development of instruments.

Inappropriate Specification and Generalization—The end results of a needs assessment is to guide the decision making on an intervention determining such policy questions as what intervention to make where, and with what population(s) (Salmon, 1967; Cooley and Lohnes, 1976). In a number of studies examined it was not possible to determine how the specific recommendations flow from the assessment findings. I suspect this break in logic springs from paradoxes in the individual responses that are partially a design problem and partially a data analysis shortcoming. Clarity of findings is not forthcoming when the basic data uses limited responses. Lack of specification in current needs assessment also springs from the political nature of field studies. Differing, conflicting responses from interest groups can make it hard for the investigator to make a choice; this situation should initiate the use of more objective data analysis techniques. It is better in most studies to discuss the techniques of data analysis than it is to try to argue for acceptance of findings based on the investigator's impartiality, especially when the population sampled includes groups. Needs assessment studies that do not contribute to the decision-making process are scarcely worth their investment, notwithstanding the authority of the muted findings.

Issues relating to the generalization of findings are widespread as a result of problems within designs in the population sample as well as inadequate data analysis. Needs assessments are often too narrowly concerned with being completely situational; thus the possibility of generalizing findings does not enter into the design of the study. But failure to give attention to generalization of the findings to a larger population is often detrimental to marketing the program in the immediate setting. Again insufficient attention to demographic variables in the sample population and too selective a dip in the population sample are gross errors that limit the generalization of findings.

Giving attention to techniques in the six areas outlined here will improve the technical design of the needs assessment and advance the specification and generalization of its findings. This advance is badly needed if the needs assessment is to be more than a political device in marketing, used mainly to calm the interest groups that abound in the areas of social policy.

A Case Study

Needs assessment studies need not be restricted to a narrow range of problems facing the social or curriculum researcher. They can serve as more than a starting point in the design of a more definitive program, as shall be demonstrated in the following brief case study. They need not be relegated to a discovery of needs in a pristine sense and ruled out as serious research for marketing the implementation of specific interventions.

A national nonprofit organization that specializes in delivery of nutrition information to the public, chiefly through the public schools, set out to create a new curriculum in nutrition education, one that could be distributed by its 35 state and regional units serving as consultants to schools. There were no precedents for the design of such a curriculum, and immediately the entire gambit of problems arose and an internal organizational debate ensued. What should be taught? Where should certain concepts be taught? Should there be content at every grade level? Should the curriculum be integrated into other subjects or separate to itself? How much time should it reasonably require? Should the curriculum be packaged with audiovisual materials? laboratory materials? individualized student-directing modules? group activities? Should the curriculum include parent education materials? As a guide to pricing, how much would schools be willing to invest in a nutrition education program? There were proponents of every view, and no overall consensus was distilled from many months of discussion. In order to move off center, where debated differences had immobilized curriculum development, a needs assessment was commissioned and designed to seek data on goals and priorities in a nutrition education curriculum for the public schools.

The investigators decided to draw on a national sample of teachers and building-level administrators as the population, since the curriculum was projected for nationwide use. This decision necessitated the use of the 35 local units and the training of their personnel to select the population to be tapped for data and to use a semistructured focused interview. The investigators designed an instrument and tested it prior to holding training sessions with the local unit designated interviewers. A sample of 148 administrators and 124 teachers were interviewed. From these data it soon became very clear that most practicing educators in public schools had established ideas on what they saw as their needs for a nutrition education curriculum, and, given the previous internal organization debate, there was considerable agreement among practitioners and very little ambiguity on some of the most hotly debated issues, such as individualized programs versus group instructional approaches. The data were analyzed for the two groups—teachers and administrators separately—and comparisons were made between and within the groups teaching grades K–3, 4–6, 7–9, and 10–12. Regional comparisons were made, but no differences were found.

Major findings of the study (Eash and Rasher, 1975) were:

1. Teachers and administrators report that most nutrition programs are integrated into one or more courses. Few teach an independent nutrition course or have a sequentially planned program. Most teachers do have some type of nutrition program, but the quantity and quality of programs vary considerably.

2. Administrators perceive the need for great improvement in existing nutrition programs. Organized programs, taught by enthusiastic, knowledgeable teachers, are desired.

3. Most teachers and administrators feel nutrition should be integrated with other subjects. Subjects suggested most often include health, science and social studies or social sciences.

4. Most teachers and administrators feel nutrition should be taught at all grade levels. Support is expressed for early introduction of nutrition concepts in kindergarten and first grade and the progressive increasing of scope and complexity throughout all grades.

5. Separate grade or grade-grouping packages are favored means of organizing a new nutrition curriculum. Curriculum guides and/or basic materials without such packages receive little support.

6. Almost all schools have a lunch program; however, administrators vary greatly regarding how their lunch programs could best enhance their nutrition education program.

7. Much support is given for health professionals visiting classrooms and serving as resource persons.

8. A good number of teachers report that many of the new materials that get into their classrooms are ordered by teachers from companies that advertise or allow teachers to preview materials. In addition, ideas from professional organizations, magazines, journals etc. are useful.

9. A wide range of individuals and groups have responsibility for the approval of new curriculum materials. Local school personnel are most often mentioned.

10. A curriculum producer's evaluation and field testing of materials are factors in the decision to approve curriculum materials in most schools.

11. Teachers and administrators hear about problems and new developments from a variety of sources, including public media and professional journals and publications.

12. Administrators and teachers vary regarding the best ways to provide in-service training. The most important constraint is time. The need for well-organized, concise in-service programs is indicated.

13. Most administrators indicate a willingness to provide time for in-service training. More than half are willing to allocate one and one-half hours or more per program. Almost one third stated they would provide whatever amount of time is needed.

14. Teachers favor the conducting of in-service training during school time. Administrators are split: a little more than one third favor school time, a few less prefer free time and still another third favor a combination of free and school time.

15. Almost half of the administrators feel that if their school district pays $10 per student for materials to initiate a new reading program, $3 or more would be a reasonable cost per student for a new nutrition program.

16. Almost all teachers and administrators view free materials favorably and welcome their availability.

17. Teachers and administrators suggest a wide range of topics of content that they would include in a nutrition education program and that they feel particularly interest students.

18. Administrators rate the appropriateness of discovery learning and problem solving significantly higher than do teachers. Teachers rate the emphasis on cognitive goals significantly higher than do administrators. Teachers also rate teacher's guides with packages for students and teacher's guides with audiovisual materials significantly higher than do administrators.

19. Teachers and administrators are most interested in teacher's guides with unit packages of students materials, audiovisual materials and instructional management systems, and least interested in applying individualized instruction to a nutrition program.

20. Teachers vary by grade and subject taught regarding how the nutrition

program should be conducted in their classes. Teachers of all subjects, usually in the primary grades, favor simple basic methods while home economics and secondary grade teachers are most interested in complex, specific information-giving methods. This is found to be true for most questions regarding nutrition curriculum.

21. Principals and teachers in grades 4–6 and 7–9 feel nutrition should be integrated with other subjects, while curriculum specialists or directors and teachers of grades K–3 and 10–12 feel nutrition should be taught as both a separate course and integrated into other subjects.

22. Differences among teachers are found regarding which subjects nutrition should be integrated with. Fewer differences are found among administrators.

23. Administrators differ regarding whom they state must approve new curriculum programs. Fewer differences are found among teachers.

24. Administrators and teachers hear about problems and new developments in nutrition from a variety of sources. Few respondents indicate regular systematic sources.

25. Teachers and administrators from low income districts prefer that in-service training be conducted on school time.

26. Significant differences among various groups of teachers and administrators are found on the ratings of questionnaire items. Teachers vary regarding the appropriateness of teaching strategies such as individualized instruction, cooking and food experiments and the use of problem solving. Teachers also vary on the usefulness of additional resource persons and the use of films, textbooks, paperbacks, transparencies, filmstrips and cassettes. Administrators differ regarding using the strategies of behavioral objectives, discovery learning and problem solving. Administrators differ regarding the usefulness of teacher's guides with student units, audiovisual materials and/or an instructional management system. There were also differences among administrators regarding the provision of administrative support, appointing of personnel to implement a new curriculum and the degree of emphasis to be given to affective and cognitive goals.

These findings proved to be invaluable in setting policy and directing the curriculum development effort. They immediately raised the level of agreement internally on the provisions of the main constructs of the curriculum and the choice of implementation strategies and instructional activities. Two major issues were not resolved—specific nutrition content and evaluation materials. These required further study and input from outside experts. Since the concern here is on management and marketing, Note how some of the research methods previously discussed assisted in making sure the needs assessment fulfulled its objectives.

The use of both a semistructured interview and a questionnaire gave clarity to the findings; there was a clearer expression of need. For example, to the item, "I'm not particularly satisfied with any aspects of the nutrition education program," two respondents answered affirmatively. Upon further probing by the interviewer it was found that one respondent—a principal— was very dissatisfied with teacher performance in nutrition, whereas the other—also a principal—was dissatisfied because nutrition education had been pushed out of the curriculum by a local emphasis on the teaching of reading and math. The sharp difference

between a perceived need and what a desired state of affairs might be in nutrition education was reflected in classroom teacher's views when compared to those of administrators and university experts. Teachers were concerned about an already overcrowded curriculum that was too demanding on outside time for preparation. As a population they wanted a curriculum that would be convenient to use, required a limited amount of teacher preparation and made it easy to evaluate student learnings. The nearer to the instructional act the respondent was, the more concern was expressed for teacher convenience in curriculum methods and materials.

Perhaps the major surprise in all findings was the preference expressed in methods. This finding ran against individualized instruction, the dominant methodology in published curriculum packages in the literature and in federal curriculum projects at the time. If one had relied upon expert opinion—that is, on university experts in nutrition education and pedagogy—a curriculum based-on individualized instruction would have been seen as desirable, while other comprehensive instructional projects—Individually Guided Education (IGE) and Individually Prescribed Instruction (IPI)—were discovering that individualized instruction was almost impossible to implement in school settings.

A major pitfall uncovered nationally in implementation concerned the issue of teacher time. As nutrition education was a new curriculum area, there would be a need for in-service training to assure proper implementation of the new materials. In-service time was very limited, and union contracts, as well as teachers' predispositions toward after-school meetings, placed great constraints on time for in-service training. There was recognition that many curriculums fail because of inadequate implementation, and to have devised a curriculum that relied heavily on in-service requirements for implementation would have doomed it prior to dissemination. Using these findings the developers commissioned the preparation of a special in-service implementation package that gave due recognition to teacher time constraints. Subsequent national evaluations of the new nutrition education curriculum have validated the original needs assessment study on all points (Eash and Rasher, 1975).

Conclusion

Needs assessment techniques are widely endorsed and used in program planning and management. They hold potential, as has been demonstrated, for bringing systematic findings to bear on a variety of problems that plague program designers—inadequate data base on alternatives in a program, poorly identified recipient populations and conflicts of perceived needs as opposed to desired states of affairs. They fill, moreover, a vital political as well as social and technical purpose in giving attention to recipient concerns prior to serving a program that may prove indigestible to the recipients as much for its form of service as its content. Needs assessments have not lived up to their name most often because they violate proven techniques of research, some of the more common problems discussed above. Needs assessments have also lacked intellectual prestige in professional research circles, being viewed as a lesser species of research though their application enters into socially significant areas earlier and more often than the prestigious, randomized experiment.

Professionals are obligated to utilize the best science available in order to

improve the human condition, whether it is action in improving the individual's life chances or improving the individual's knowledge about life's chances. The use of better research methodology, already available, in needs assessment techniques will advance this knowledge by improving direct action project design and materially aiding all parties to the transaction.

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A School District Can Market While Learning To Market

William H. Dierdorff

THE SOCIAL, political and economic forces both within and outside public education dictate that if local school districts are to serve effectively, they must regularly examine their positions in the community. Parents of school-age children are a shrinking percentage of the population. More citizens are becoming involved with local government and school matters. Special interest groups are working to make changes important to them. People are becoming more concerned with how public bodies spend tax money. All aspects of education are confronted with critical national reports and state pressures to make financial and instructional changes.

The most visible effects of these pressures have been public demand for property tax reduction and the imminent danger of school closure, as well as increased expectations for education. State legislatures and departments of education around the country are scrambling to take various actions to show that they are trying to accommodate those concerns.

The role of the local school district should not be to defend or rationalize a position but to make sure the public is getting a product it wants and needs. For the school district to determine the public's desires, it must establish a communications process that includes both listening and informing. School districts can best determine the perceptions of their communities and the ways to serve them by adopting the business concept of marketing.

Marketing is a process for determining everything necessary to create any product, from concept to sale. It involves the entire organization—and is a part of everything that business and industry do. A systematic review of marketing concepts will determine what schools actually are—and what they are perceived to be.

In the present climate of patron involvement, schools need to take a look at their operations, make necessary adjustments and market themselves. Strong public relations and marketing efforts can improve the public's image of education. This objective of improving the image and reputation of schools and staff can be accomplished through developing effective staff communications and researching and identifying alternative marketing techniques rather than simply focusing on public relations.

Many school districts succumb to the pleas of program supporters to retain all current programs and "sell" the voters on the virtues of the status quo. But

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selling is not the same as marketing. Marketing requires an analysis of what the customer wants to buy, not just what the school district wants to sell. The marketing concept should be developed in the public schools context. Through the actual *business* of operating public schools, education can capitalize on the expertise of the business world.

One method for developing this expertise—and one that actually markets a school district while it learns to market—is to develop a business-advisory task force.

The Business-Advisory Task Force

Public education is a business—often the largest business in town. As a public agency, a school district is expected to function in a businesslike manner. The North Clackamas School District in Oregon took steps to address this public expectation in November 1982 when the school board approved the idea of forming a business-advisory task force. Initially school district staff formulated the task force concept to define businesslike practices and improve operational efficiency while strengthening the linkage between the school district and the business community. But they soon discovered that here was a relationship that could prove beneficial to all—the school district, the business community and the community in general.

During exploratory discussions with major suppliers, a similar project was discovered at the Seattle Public Schools, Seattle, Washington, where a program established in March 1982 focused on four major projects over a six-month period. North Clackamas exchanged information with Seattle and then arranged a visit that included interviews with business members of the Seattle advisory task force as well as the Seattle School District staff. The data gathered was then compiled and reviewed to serve as a foundation for the North Clackamas model.

The original goal in establishing the North Clackamas Business-Advisory Task Force was to achieve a more efficient and effective operation. As the design emerged, however, the objectives were expanded to include:

1) improved accountability
2) increased credibility
3) improved public image
4) greater awareness within the community of how the school district operates
5) increased opportunities for development of school district administrative staff
6) direct feedback on the qualifications of recent school district graduates
7) development of new work experience and vocational training resources.

Because of the scope of these objectives, a long-term, continuing model for the task force was recognized as providing more advantages than a short-term, special projects model.

To provide a manageable operating framework, two key limitations were established for the task force:

1) It would be advisory only, making no budget or policy decisions.
2) Its focus would be on only noninstructional operations.

To understand the composition of the North Clackamas School District's Business-Advisory Task Force, a brief description of the school district is in order. The district, fifth largest in Oregon, is located in a suburban area south of Portland. Out of a local population of 70,000, the approximate student enrollment (K–12) is 11,900. Within the school district's 40-square-mile area there is no central business core but, rather, a mixture of residential, commercial, light industrial and regional-warehouse areas plus a regional shopping center.

Within this community, membership in the task force was sought from individuals who:

1) would have executive management experience in multimillion-dollar organizations
2) would have an interest in the school district either as a resident-parent or as a manager for a major property tax payer in the school district
3) could provide a balance of perspective
4) would be willing to volunteer time and expertise.

To identify these targeted potential members, a list of the largest property owners was obtained from the county assessor, the major suppliers of school district services were determined and a list of other organizations sharing common interests with the school district was compiled. Four categories emerged:

1) the five largest property owners
2) utility companies
3) financial institutions (banking and insurance)
4) professional and other members of the community (including representatives from state, county and local business associations).

Following board approval of this targeted membership in spring 1983, the school district superintendent and the busines manager initiated individual contact with the prospective members. In June, 18 business and community members joined the school district superintendent and business manager to form the nucleus of the Business-Advisory Task Force and begin operations. Represented on the task force are professionals in marketing, engineering, distribution, risk management, personnel management, facilities management, architecture, public works, economic development, auditing, labor law, banking and senior citizens. All together, this is a "brain trust" of consultants that few school districts could afford to assemble.

Because of the levels of responsibility and working schedules of the members, monthly breakfast meetings were established, with a light buffet breakfast catered by one of the school cafeterias. One of the community members was selected chairman, and the chairman meets with the superintendent and business manager to prepare each meeting's agenda. In addition to the current task force project, the agenda includes a school district update covering issues of general interest. Evaluations are periodically requested from the members to verify that

their time is being used effectively. No July or August meetings are held, and, if information scheduled for a particular meeting is not available at that time, the meeting is postponed. Occasional meetings at a school district school or facility expand the perspective of the task force; in one case, a school bus was used for a field trip to the warehouse.

Task Force Projects

Task Force projects are selected on a need basis and have taken varied forms. Options for implementation include:

1) hiring a consultant to develop a project, with task force evaluation of progress and results
2) having task force members or representatives from their organizations review the material and develop the project
3) having the task force serve as a review board for regular school district operations.

The first project undertaken was to develop a long-range financial planning model to be accessed by microcomputer. This was accomplished with the help of a consultant and now serves as an excellent model to answer "what if" questions and to project the impact of proposed changes over a seven-year period. Not only did the task force assist in developing the operational model, but members were able to provide insights from the experiences of personnel in their organizations who had been working for years with financial planning models.

The second project was a marketing analysis, to include a review of marketing research and the development of a model for a school district marketing plan. The first phase—identifying a process—is completed and will be described later. The second—implementing the marketing analysis—is beginning. A unique aspect of the first phase of the marketing analysis was that the school district *was* marketing while it was *learning* to market!

The third project—the review and evaluation of the school district's purchasing and warehouse operations—resulted in the school district's receiving advice on the use of computer inventory, stockless purchasing and delivery options. During the discussions many similarities between public and private purchasing became evident and the school district's purchasing supervisor was introduced to additional resources.

The next project awaiting the task force is to review the school district's process of analyzing sites and facilities.

Development of the Process for Market Analysis—To develop the market analysis, literature pertaining to business and public school marketing was reviewed. Relevant business resources are readily available, and those concepts can generally be transferred to public education. The marketing techniques most applicable to a school district were those for marketing intangible products and for marketing nonprofit organizations.

A key concept that emerged from the literature was stressed by Levitt (1981, p. 100): "The most important thing about intangible products is that the customers usually don't know what they're getting until they don't get it." This was helpful in evaluating the total "product" line of public schools.

Following the initial research, a draft of a marketing analysis was presented to the Business-Advisory Task Force for review. Based on its responses, the business area of "strategic planning for change" was also researched. Another reference, Kotler's *Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations* (1982) was discovered to be simultaneously in use at some of the task force members' organizations.

As the process took shape it became apparent that two major steps would be needed before a marketing plan could be developed:

1) identification of the components of the marketing analysis
2) development of a means for surveying public opinion in order to validate those components.

To clarify the process used for the public survey, the task force identified four general subdivisions ("categories") of the marketing plan: markets, customers, competitors and macroenvironment. (See figure 1 on page 75.) These categories were further defined by being stratified into four "levels"—the highest being their "categories" level, followed by levels for elements, issues and alternatives. (See figure 2 on page 75.) The task force helped fill out the first two levels, with the remaining two to be completed by a public input process. (See figure 3 on page 76.)

To receive input from the various segments of the public, both internal and external to the school district, and to develop a community-based marketing plan, the task force recommended that a continual process for surveying and analyzing the marketplace be established. A process developed and tested by William J. Banachi (1982) utilizes a number of questions to be reviewed and answered by staff, patrons and various special interest groups. The information gathered then becomes the basis for designing alternatives to implement a marketing plan.

Sample questions from Banachi's process include:

- What do we have that is marketable?
- What do we have that the people want?
- What do we have that the people need?
- What weaknesses do we have in the marketplace?
- What strengths do we have in the marketplace?
- How can we let people know what we are doing?
- Who is the competition?
- What resources are needed?

The school district incorporated components of Banachi's process into its existing advisory committee structure as a means of validating the market categories.

Staff will prioritize the elements of Level II and will target groups in the community as sources for information. A time line will be established for meetings with constituent groups. Staff will then audit each group, using the market research procedure for schools, to determine what is wanted and needed from the school district, the school district's perceived strengths and weaknesses and accordingly, steps to capitalize on those strengths and improve on those weaknesses.

The audits will determine market targets—people who might be interested in the school district's marketable assets and goals, both within and outside the market groups. In conjunction, information gained regarding the public's perceptions of the school district will give staff material for creating a good public image. The audits will also examine the school district's competition and resources for dealing with it.

Results of the community audits will be compiled and analyzed by staff, with the help of a consultant as needed. The issues raised in the audits will constitute Level III of the market analysis structure. This analysis will result in a set of alternatives for the school district's marketing and communications scheme. Those alternatives will be presented to the school district board of directors and the task force for feedback. Then the alternatives will be prioritized and implemented, with periodic progress reports presented to the board and task force. Based on task force suggestions, the entire process will be regularly reevaluated to make sure the school district keeps current with its marketplace. The processes for developing both the Business-Advisory Task Force and the marketing analysis are complex and require continual feedback.

The steps in the marketing process are cyclical. They include:

1) reviewing marketing literature to develop a draft market analysis process
2) evaluating the marketing process
3) finalizing the marketing process
4) developing the draft market analysis
5) evaluating the market analysis plan
6) finalizing the market analysis plan
7) implementing the market analysis
8) evaluating the results
9) developing the draft marketing plan
10) evaluating the marketing plan
11) finalizing the marketing plan
12) implementing the marketing plan
13) evaluating the marketing plan
14) periodically updating all of the above.

Projects for both the task force and the market analysis will continue to evolve over the years, and, as experience with the task force has demonstrated, they will benefit both the school district and the community. In addition to the school district's learning from the task force, task force members are sharing with and learning from each other.

Benefit does not come without cost, however, and an awareness of a school district's necessary commitment is essential. First, a school district must recognize that there must be a time commitment from its staff members. In addition, the desired results require a group of action-oriented people who do not want to waste time. Time lines and projects must be readied and completed as promised—in a "businesslike" manner.

Education is a business and can be operated as one. A key element to the success of any business is to utilize the strengths and resources available to it. One often unrecognized resource for public education is the local business community. A business-advisory task force can tap that resource to analyze and market school district services—for the benefit of all.

References

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Figure 1

Market Analysis Structure
Definition of Terms

CATEGORIES

Market

A market is a potential arena for the trading of resources. The school district's part of that market can be identified as the services or products, tangible or intangible, that are provided by the district.

Customers

The school district's customers include all people receiving benefits from the district for which they exchange a vote, payment or service.

Competitors

The school district's competitors include all entities vying for taxpayer votes, taxes and/or students.

Macroenvironment

Macroenvironment describes all economic and governmental forces and institutions that affect, directly or indirectly, the school district and its market, customers and competitors.

Figure 2

Market Analysis Structure
Definition of Terms

LEVELS

Level I, Categories General subdivisions of the marketing plan for the North Clackamas School District Market Analysis Structure listed in next section.

Level II, Elements Expansion of the Level I categories to include the groups, institutions and sources constituting each category.

Level III, Issues The political or economic factors affecting decisions of Level II elements.

Level IV, Alternatives Possible ways for the school district to meet the requirements of its market and customers while dealing with competitors and the environment.

Figure 3

Market Analysis Structure

LEVEL I *CATEGORIES*	LEVEL II *ELEMENTS*	LEVEL III *ISSUES*	LEVEL IV *ALTERNATIVES*
Markets	Public education, K-12 Activities Community schools Pride and community identity Security Economic base for community Recreation The future		
Customers	Internal: Students Staff Parents Advisory committees Parent associations		
	External: Government Businesses Nonstudent households Social service agencies Parents of private school students Senior citizens Community groups		

LEVEL I *CATEGORIES*	LEVEL II *ELEMENTS*	LEVEL III *ISSUES*	LEVEL IV *ALTERNATIVES*
Competitors	Service: Church schools Community colleges Business schools and training programs Private schools Home teaching		
	Dollars: All other gov't agencies (city, county, local tax districts like water and fire) State legislative budget General economy		
Macroenvironment	National focus and reports Education trends Economy Demographics Technology Government regulations		

7

How to Win Next Time: Public Relations and School Bond Issue Elections

Charles Stanley

IN MOST COMMUNITIES, education is a large-scale financial and social operation. Because it is quite literally the public's business, it is often subjected to severe criticism. People are demanding proof that their schools are good and that they are getting their money's worth. Yet many schools still ask for public support without first creating an understanding in the community of the financial and social realities of operating a school. These systems are flirting with disaster; their bond issues often fail. The future of our schools depends upon adequate financing, and that depends on involving the community in successfully resolving the social issues schools confront.

Analysis of the experiences of many schools has been convincing that public support—financial and moral—springs directly from the establishment of sound communication with the community well in advance of a referendum or other requests. This chapter will share a number of tactics and procedures that public schools have used successfully to gain community support and to win bond elections. The material presented on creating and maintaining an effective public relations program should also be useful to those seeking a *broader* school-community diaglogue.

Changing Times

Education has grown from the one-room school to an often financially troubled big business operation. School administrators assume almost corporate responsibilities; citizens finance the system; students and teachers adjust to modular scheduling and use resource learning centers. Complicating their continuing financial problems, schools daily confront the social issues of desegregation orders, forced busing, inflation and taxpayer revolts.

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It is not surprising, then, that a recent report of the U.S. Office of Education (Bagin, Grazian, and Harrison, 1976, p. viii) describes a sharp drop in public confidence in those running educational institutions. In 1974, for example, 49 percent of the people surveyed reported "a great deal of confidence in educational administrators." By 1975 that percentage had dropped to a dismaying 39.9 percent. Yet, despite the lack of public confidence, administrators must meet federal and state mandated instructional programs, provide and maintain adequate facilities and deal with forced busing and similar issues—NOW.

Eventually, state legislatures will have to play a larger role in reforming school financing, but what of the need now for good financing and community involvement in the school system? It is simply not enough to plead, "We're overcrowded;" to threaten, "We will have to eliminate programs unless we pass this levy;" to scold, "What's more important, your child's education or a few more dollars in your pocketbook?" Administrators must begin to develop a more organized approach to winning bond issues until enough political pressure can be exerted to update methods of school financing.

So, too, a new approach to solving the school's social issues is needed. School administrators must deal quickly and effectively with the growing public distrust—a distrust too often translates into citizen apathy or a "no" vote on a school bond issue.

An important first step in restoring public confidence and obtaining money is to establish an ongoing, year-round public relations program. The idea of public relations programs for schools is not new, of course. Many school officials, however, have not thoroughly examined this approach to gaining public support. People need to know that the school system is open and responsive to the community, and that means that the public relations program must be directed to everyone. The audience is not just teachers, not just parents, not just community leaders. The audience is everybody—including the students (Bagin, Grazian, and Harrison, 1976, p. 3).

A good school communications system is not in operation only before tax levies; it's more than a quarterly newsletter; it's more than the occasional times when the news media comes to the school. District officials should be conscientiously operating a two-way communications system every day of the year. Until the public stops viewing the school's communications system as one-way propaganda, there will be no real communication, and public education will continue to suffer the consequences.

Honesty and sensitivity are crucial aspects of the successful public relations program. If school administrators are open and frank with the citizens in the community as they speak with them about the financial and social problems within the school system, they will regain financial and moral support. So, too, communities that have successfully passed bond issues and levies demonstrate a complete understanding of what their schools are doing and why they are doing it. They accept that a particular program is a practical and useful activity for boys and girls. People will support something they understand and of which they are a part.

The following section presents case histories of schools that have maintained public support and confidence through sound public relations programs.

Some Successful Public Relations Programs

The last time the Oklahoma City School District voted "no" on school financing was in 1938. This record is even more striking because in Oklahoma City millage levies must be passed annually. The success of school funding issues has been attributed to a year-round public relations program devoted to keeping the community as well informed as possible of all school programs and plans, through all communication methods available. The district sends a monthly newsletter to each employee's home and encourages a free flow of information between media representatives and all school district employees.

Before each election, a community awareness survey determines community needs. In addition, the school district develops a take-home flyer for every student and adult attending school-related organizations. The flyer outlines the issues in *understandable terms*. It explains who may vote, where and when. It also presents information in a question-answer format, a highly readable method of communication that can deal with small doubts as well as big questions and assures attention by its brevity. Operating the schools in this open and responsive manner has resulted in continuous voter support in Oklahoma City.

Parkway Schools, a suburban school district of approximately 68 square miles and 25,000 students near St. Louis, Missouri, has won a national reputation for passing bond issues in a time when most districts have soundly defeated them. At one time, the school district track record included 14 successful bond issues, which made possible the expansion of seven schools and the building of 22 new ones. In a state that requires a two-thirds majority for the passage of bond issues, Parkway Schools achieved an average of 75 percent favorable votes in bond issue elections.

Parkway works very hard on year-round communications, takes elections seriously and respects the wishes of the community. A key factor in the district's success has been the sensitivity, awareness and commitment on the part of the board of education, administration and staff to the community at large. School administrators stay in touch with the community through a group of volunteers called the *Parkway Pacesetters*. The 1,500 block captains in this group serve as liaison between the school and the community by answering questions, channeling concerns to building principals, correcting rumors and welcoming newcomers to the district. Elementary school parent-volunteers make contact with all the homes in the district, and secondary school parent-volunteers are in touch with businesses. Parkway's election campaigns have been organized and led by these citizens, but elections are just one part of the school district's ongoing communications program. Other communities surrounding Parkway have implemented similar programs, tailoring them to their particular needs, and they have also enjoyed successful election results.

Bellingham, Washington, a semirural community with slightly more than 9,000 students, is another school district that has enjoyed success at the polls. It has established three basic goals:

1) Credibility of staff and board of education is rigorously pursued.

2) Familiarity with and participation in a continuous public relations program are expected of all employees.

3) Additional funding is sought only for those new programs that both school *and* voter perceive as needed.

The Bellingham system must go to the polls annually for 30 percent of its budget. The administration utilizes working committees of respected citizens who sometimes meet without a school administrator being present. They run a strong campaign, well organized and well timed. And they are meticulous about details. Every person who works on the campaign receives a thank-you letter. This kind of follow-up is important. Bellingham understands that the school must implement the voted-for program, but also remembers those who made it possible. School administrators may have to ask them to help again next year.

Glenview, Illinois, a district of approximately 4,000 students in eight schools, also uses volunteers to maintain personal contact between school and community. Feature stories and weekly guest articles related to the schools appear in the local newspaper, and news conferences are held before each school board meeting. Glenview's other public relations techniques include newsletters, individual school newspapers, summaries of board actions, staff newsletters and conferences with adult organizations related to the school. A continuous effort is made to receive community input.

Voters in Brighton, Michigan, a district of 5,000 students, recently approved two new schools and a swimming pool in a year when 8 of the 10 bond issues across the state were defeated. The school district operates a year-round public relations effort with two basic assumptions:

1) Public relations must have the unstinting support and encouragement of the school board and administration.
2) Public relations costs money.

Brighton has a formal director of public relations and an established budget; all publications are professionally done. This approach begins with a board-level decision to delegate the responsibility for carrying out public relations to someone other than the superintendent. Professional help tends to encourage a positive attitude and a feeling of confidence within the staff and the community. In addition, school administrators report on all educational programs—the successes as well as the failures. That also establishes credibility.

School community relations are just as important in small districts as in large. Little Falls, Minnesota, has a small-scale public relations program that has been successful in earning the public's financial support for needed program changes. The program is ongoing, not crisis-oriented. An organizer working within a limited budget spends about two hours per week on public relations. Little Falls recognizes that not everything that happens in school is good, but that the failures should be reported honestly. If the public relations program serves no other purpose, it is at least a "gossip stopper."

The school district in Evanston, Illinois, also uses its public relations program to encourage voter approval of bond issues. This program operates primarily through community churches. Initial contact between all local ministers, school administrative staff and board members was established with a Saturday morning breakfast. After a follow-up breakfast, the superintendent and staff attended as many church services as possible and encouraged informal discussion about education from the congregation. The result was increased interest in the schools, guest appearances of school staff at church functions, acquisition of church volunteers and renewed confidence in the schools. A two-way street was

opened between the school and the community's church-going residents.

Good public relations programs do not have to be expensive, but they must be organized and supported by a consistent administrative policy. Resources must be allocated to generate that sense of community "togetherness" essential to success.

A good relationship with the media helps promote an honest flow of information. School districts should have an official spokesperson and a backup person to handle situations when the top person is unavailable. In addition, representatives of the press and broadcast media will often want to speak directly to teachers and other personnel to add human interest to their stories. Successful public relations programs encourage these contacts.

A vital ingredient in a successful public relations program is simplicity—especially with the media and the volunteer community. Educational "gobbledygook" may sound impressive but fails to communicate. Common everyday words can be used to describe even the most radical educational innovation. Aims are easily understood when they are expressed in terms of *who, what, when* and *where*.

Finally, while the programs described here are geared to winning school funding elections, they can be modified to promote understanding and awareness of a school's other problems as well. Good public relations are essential to every school administration—whether or not it is dependent on voter-approved financing.

Trends in School Bond Issue Elections

School bond issue elections in Ohio, West Virginia and Iowa, three states in which schools are dependent on publicly voted funding, confirm that public support for the schools is declining. Yet success was still possible where an incentive or definite need was established.

Table 1 summarizes school-financing election issues in Ohio, a state that requires a 50-percent vote for approval, during a five-year period.

Table 2 shows the county-by-county success rate of school bond issues in West Virginia during the first five years of its Better School Building Program, an incentive program for capital improvements for school facilities. To be eligible to participate in the program, the school had to complete a comprehensive plan approved by the state and make an effort to provide additional local funds. At that time, West Virginia required a 60-percent vote for approval. The average percentage of the vote received for an issue that passed was 71.41 percent. The average percentage of the vote received for an issue that failed was 41.64 percent. The total dollar value of successful issues amounted to $91,709,000.

Table 3 shows the number of school bond issues gaining approval (60 percent required) and the number gaining a simple majority in Iowa for a 12-year period.

Election trends in Ohio, West Virginia and Iowa give us a clear picture of what is happening with school issues—across the nation. Schools that depend upon voter approval for financing improvements are finding it hard to win consistently. Even in West Virginia, where there was the added incentive of the state-funded Better School Building Program, 17 of 38 proposed bond issues failed on election day.

Keep in mind that these are merely charts and statistics which simply cannot reveal the *human* reasons behind the success or failure of a school financing issue. They do forcefully point out that new approaches to winning elections are desperately needed. Educators, builders, engineers, architects and educational consultants must begin to work together—and in harness with the citizens who make up a school district in order to pass funding issues. The continued quality education of our children mandates this cooperation.

Some generalizations based on studies and analyses of past school financing elections may assist school administrators preparing for bond issue elections. These observations hold true for large and small districts and for urban and rural settings.

The type of issue (bond versus operating levy) and the kind of election (general versus special) do not have much effect on final election results. Studies show there is no significant difference in the rates of success of school financing issues balloted during regular elections and those presented in special elections. A general rule of thumb, however, is that school issues ought not to be mixed with political issues. The fewer the issues facing the voter, the less confusion there is over them. A special ballot:

1) indicates to the voter that the school bond issue is important and cannot wait
2) reduces the block of negative votes.

It is best to try to pass the issue the first time around, as it is often more difficult to pass an issue on the second, third or fourth try, especially when voters feel free to vote no for reasons such as "Let's force the state to give us more money," or "The schools can wait a little longer for more money."

The dollar amount is not a significant factor in success or failure, although the general trend is that the more asked for, the less the chance of success. Regardless of the dollar size of the isssue, the school district must establish positive need.

Tax issues have been continuously supported in districts with a good public relations program. When the community has been actively consulted, its needs met and a comprehensive plan for financing educational development prepared, success usually follows.

Well-organized school campaigns also have positive results. People need to be assured that they are getting full value for their dollars and not merely being asked to fund the latest educational fad or boondoggle.

In addition, the following strategies may help ensure the public support necessary to pass bond issues.

Preelection Analysis

Once the decision is made to vote on a bond issue, school district administrators need to assess the chances of winning. A basic procedure is to establish a "potential-for-winning index" (PWI) calculated from the results of the last three or four school financing elections. The index is formulated upon the difference between the highest previous turnout of "yes" votes and the highest previous

turnout of "no" votes (+ or −), precinct by precinct. Districtwide election totals do not reflect the trend in voting patterns from one election to another in individual precincts.

If an election appears unwinnable, a campaign will not save it from defeat unless the school district can influence enough borderline precincts to establish a positive PWI. For example, in one school district that had lost three bond issues, voting had fluctuated so much that the PWI showed a −128. The fourth try was defeated by only 58 votes. By increasing its PWI to +267 during its fifth election attempt, the district won by approximately the same margin as its previous defeat.

Once the PWI is established and indications are that the bond issue has a chance to win, an election date needs to be set. Research has shown that certain months of the year, and certain times of the month, have higher success rates than others.

Table 4 indicates the percentage of school issues that have been successful each month of the year. Generally, the earlier in the calendar year an election is held, the better its chances for success. A major exception is August.

Table 5 indicates the percentage of school issues that have been successful during a specific time of the month. Generally, school bond issue elections should not be held during the last few days of the month or during the period just before the 15th. The 18th for example is two to three times more successful than the 28th. It would appear people tend to vote "no" as they reach the end of their two-week or bimonthly pay periods.

Table 6 indicates the percentage of school issues that have been successful on each day of the week. It seems that the day of the week is as important as the time of the month. Thursday is far better than the traditional Tuesday election day.

Voter Analysis

From the presidential level on down, campaigns are often won or lost by less than one vote per precinct. In many local tax campaigns the total margins are less than 100 votes. When voting margins are this narrow, it becomes obvious how important it is to find out who will support the school district—and get them to the polls. Voter analysis is one key to victory.

Studies have established that only about 40 percent of the eligible voters will turn out for a bond election, and that these same 40 percent have cast 80 percent of all votes over the previous several years (Banachi, 1971, pp. 24–25). In simple terms, this means that it is a waste of effort, time and money to attempt to secure the vote of a person who historically does not vote.

People who are socially involved are more likely to vote than the socially alienated, and, when they vote, they are more likely to support bond issues (Johnson, 1971, pp. 51–55). The socially involved are those persons who participate in practically everything that goes on in the school district, from service clubs and PTA to the chamber of commerce, church groups, charitable organizations, YMCA, farm groups, women's clubs and so on. The socially alienated are those who have a sense of isolation from other groups. They are nonparticipants. Often they are rejected by their peers, or at least think of themselves as rejected. A primary objective should be to engage the support of the socially involved. Efforts directed at the socially alienated are seldom worthwhile, as these people

probably will not show up at the polls in any significant number, and, if they do vote, they will probably not vote for the bond issue.

The newly enfranchised voter represents a particular challenge. Young people between 18 and 21 generally have little or no family responsibility and are not likely to have formed a strong resistance to the tax structure, as they have not had much experience with it. They tend to be more idealistic than their elders and are more familiar with the present problems of the school district, having just graduated out of the system. Unfortunately they are also inclined not to show up at the polls (Gallup International, November 1970). One of the major efforts of the campaign must be to reach this group of young voters, register them and see to it that they are at the polls on election day.

Parents of school-aged children are more likely to support the bond issue (U.S. Office of Education, 1975). This group is one of the easiest to reach and certainly one of the most important.

As a group, retired persons will be the least supportive of all. Many live on fixed incomes and have no direct interest in the schools unless a grandchild is in attendance. No amount of explanation will be successful in gaining their support, so it's best simply to answer their questions, be polite and leave them alone. If there are some ardent supporters among the elderly—retired school teachers, for example—they will likely have the free time to be volunteer workers in the campaign.

Voter support is roughly proportional to educational attainment (Gallup International, December 1970). College graduates are generally more liberal, better informed of school activities and more tolerant of school discipline standards than persons with only a high school or grade school education. A primary effort should be made to seek these people out and keep them involved.

Women are often more familiar with schools than men. They may also have stronger feelings about specific school activities. Most important, they more often vote favorably on school issues than men. It is vital that they not be overlooked in the campaign.

Property owners have a vested interest in referenda and may tend not to support the bond issue. Those who understand that the value of their properties is tied to the excellence of nearby schools may be encouraged to vote to tax themselves in their own best interest. Renters feel that they do not have a direct stake in a property tax and tend to vote more favorably than property owners (Johnson, 1971, pp. 51–55). Although renters are not always a large group, they should be targeted by the campaign.

Business and professional people are more apt to vote and to support school issues than any other group (Gallup International, December 1970). It is essential that they be involved in election procedures and that they vote.

With the exceptions of the alienated, the elderly and some property owners, all the groups described here tend to support school bond issues. The more of these groups that a person falls into, the more favorable he or she will be. But the single most reliable indicator of a voter's position is his or her vote in the preceding elections. While it is not possible to determine a person's exact vote on each issue, the records will show registration as a Democrat, Republication or independent; they also reveal how regularly the person votes in primary and general elections. On a precinct-by-precinct basis, then, votes can be predicted. For example, if the last election showed a sweeping Republican victory in one

precinct and a resounding defeat in that same precinct for a school issue, it can be assumed that many Republicans there voted against the school issue. This is a rough calculus, but one worth developing.

Campaign Strategies

Every single campaign strategy the school district employs must be judged against its impact at the polling place. The goal is to obtain a sufficient number of supporters who will actually vote come election day to overcome the negative voters who will always show up.

A potentially successful school campaign has three components:

1) a good issue—a proven need
2) good community support
3) a good campaign organization, involving segments of the entire community.

To obtain these objectives:

1) Objectively evaluate voting behavior, public opinion and the issue itself.
2) Obtain strong leadership to raise campaign money and run the campaign on a day-to-day basis—usually this means more than one person.
3) Don't leave anyone out.
4) Follow a plan of action. Figure backward and put a "preparation start" date on the calendar for each actual target date or event in the campaign. Prepare rebuttals in advance, when it is easier to get good ideas and prepare positive publicity. Make a plan; then execute it.
5) Identify by name, address and phone number all supporters and get them to the polls.
6) Use common sense.

The Power Structure—Those planning the campaign should identify the "power structure" in the district and enlist its support at a very early date in the campaign. The power structure of a community is a loosely defined, unofficial group of persons who, by reason of position and/or persuasive ability, are influential over large segments of the electorate. They may be politicians, professional people, business people, farmers, housewives or members of any group. They have as a common denominator the ability to get others to accept a particular line of reasoning. Since this group is composed of people who often know each other to some extent, campaign planners can often identify its members simply by asking, "Who else do you think could help us in this?"

Funding—Another important aspect of the campaign is funding. Some of the people in the power structure will also be sources for campaign financing, and there will likely be a small group of people who do not want to be involved beyond making a financial contribution. The bulk of the funds will probably come from a few generous givers.

It is important to recognize that people give money most easily to friends who say simply, "This is something that deserves your support. *I* believe in it." An explanation of the program can follow, but it really does not have the persuasive

power of the urgent request coming from a trusted acquaintance or friend.

Campaign Organization—A good campaign organization is crucial to success. Separate individuals will be needed for each of the slots shown in the organization chart below. These people need not know each other before the campaign, but once they meet, compatibility and trust should be encouraged among them.

A good steering committee will be needed to direct the campaign. It should be composed of seven people: the school superintendent, a finance chairman, a campaign chairman, a board of education representative, a teachers' representative, an employees' representative and a students' representative. This group should meet weekly to keep the organization running, establish meaningful approaches to problems and brief each other on weekly developments in area represented.

The campaign chairman should be the best leader available in the community, with "best" understood as having a well-known name, among other attributes. Other campaign commitee members should include precinct captains and voter identification and turnout coordinators to identify yes votes and undecided votes. The many volunteers assisting them will need considerable encouragement along the way as their work will be largely invisible to other volunteers until election day. The advertising coordinator prepares (or has volunteers prepare) news stories according to the committee's plan of action and current circumstances. This person is responsible for meeting deadlines and sending thank-you letters to media persons and others. The promotional materials coordinator uses volunteers to obtain promotional materials, schedules printing and arranges distribution with volunteers. Although work on campaign literature must be done well in advance of distribution, distribution should begin only three weeks prior to the vote. The promotional materials coordinator may solicit volunteers from school-related organizations and should line up pledges for this support well in advance of the time they are needed.

Voter Identification and Turnout—The work of the voter identification and turnout coordinators is especially important. They organize supporters from among the socially involved and break them into subgroups by precincts, wards or districts, depending upon whichever is most easily organized. The total number of people involved in this work might well approach or even exceed one percent of the electorate. It is important to obtain a list of all the voters in the district. If the district requires registration, the voter registration list will be available. If not, city or county directories will help. This list of voters does not have to be complete, but the more complete it is, the better the chances for success.

It is the job of these coordinators to break the voter list down by precincts, wards or districts and assign a block of voters to each subgroup on the voter identification and turnout committees. Each subgroup has the responsibility of determining the issue position—for, against, undecided—of as many people on its list as possible. The great majority of determinations can be made by simply gathering the subgroup together and going over each name. In most cases one or more members of the subgroup will be able to project the probable vote of each listed voter. As positions become known, names should be sorted into yes and no files.

People thought to be undecided, or whose position is unknown, should be contacted personally. No attempt need be made at this time to influence the

voter's opinion. It is best not to ask a person his or her position directly but rather to engage in a general discussion of the issues that will suggest what the vote will be. Studies show that many people, if they are questioned directly, will give the answer they think the person asking the question wants to hear rather than reporting their true feelings. By this process of contact and discussion, the number of unknown or undecided voters can be reduced.

Soon these coordinators will be able to tabulate the number of yes votes. The primary objective is, of course, to have a sufficient number of supporters to win the election. That number can be determined by looking at the record of previous bond elections, both total voter turnout and positive and negative votes. If it is impossible to project probable turnout by an examination of records, other less accurate systems may be used. The county chairmen of local political parties may be willing to disclose their projects for vote totals on an important political race. Generally, turnout seems to be inversely proportional to the size of the sponsoring municipality. A margin of 15 percent yes votes is needed to win.

For each voter in the yes file, the voter identification coordinator should again determine how consistently the voter has gone to the polls in the preceding years. This is public information, readily obtained. Within 72 hours of the election, the voter turnout coordinator should have committee members contact each potential yes voter with a *spotty* voting record and remind him or her of the upcoming election. Committee members should also contact undecided voters with regular voting records and attempt to win their support. Undecided voters with spotty records can be contacted to determine their current position; if they seem favorable, they should be reminded of the election date. At this time it is not necessary for the coordinators and committee members to call anyone opposed to the issue or anyone in the yes file who votes regularly.

As a final step, the voter identification and turnout committees must be organized to watch the polls and telephone all potential yes voters on election day, four or five hours before the polls close to remind them to vote. The first voters they should call are those with spotty voting records, then those who vote regularly.

Obviously the success of this system is only as good as the lists and files that have been developed. There is no portion of the campaign more important than this list making and selective calling.

If the lists do not include enough names to pass the election, other campaign strategies can help if it is early enough. These involve concentrating on those groups generally supportive of bond issues—business and professional people, parents of school children, college graduates, women and so forth. They should be convinced that their support is crucial and that it is important to remember to vote.

In addition the voter turnout coordinator should see to it that youthful, newly enfranchised voters are approached early enough to register if registration is needed. On election day the coordinator should try to overcome their apathy or reluctance to vote. Hard work with this group will be richly rewarded.

Absentee ballots can matter, too. The voter turnout coordinator should suggest that yes voters who will be out of town on election day use this method of voting.

Timing—It is often thought that the more advance time given to a promotional campaign, the better the chance to win. But it is not necessarily true. Once people become interested and involved they will participate, but only until that

interest or involvement diminishes. For many voters the last two weeks of the campaign will be the first two weeks, for suddenly they are aware of the upcoming election. It is important to remember that the vote must come when interest is high. Delay beyond that peak of interest will be harmful.

An exception is the district where the public is apathetic about school-related matters. If apathy is widespread, the district must initiate a continuing public relations campaign to restore confidence and involvement in the school district before any bond issue or levy is attempted.

For districts with good communication between the public and the schools, the campaign should begin about three months before election day. Preliminary, general information can be released ahead of time, but debates, lengthy discussions and the organization of citizens' assistance groups should be avoided before the campaign officially opens. The initial announcement opening the campaign is the single most important tactic. It must be well presented. Most people, probably 75 percent or more, make up their minds the very first time they hear of an issue. Once begun, the campaign should be orchestrated to bring interest among potential yes voters to a peak at election time.

Other Strategies—Certain strategies tend to be more successful than others. Studies have shown that in school elections:

1) Newspaper coverage must be favorable.

2) Letter-to-the-editor campaigns are decidedly bad.

3) Illustrated drawings of a proposed building are not a worthwhile investment and may, in fact, tend to cost more votes than they attract. Seventy percent of the successful districts provided such drawings, but 74 percent of the unsuccessful districts also did so.

4) Helpers should stick to their areas of competence. Lay leaders can be of real assistance in the campaign, but they will tend to harm chances if they assist in the development of educational needs. Conversely, members of the professional educational staff should not be involved in the campaign, but they will increase the bond issue's chances if they are involved in the development of educational needs.

5) Organized opposition is harmful. Only about half the districts that encountered organized opposition were successful, whereas well over 70 percent of districts without organized opposition were successful. It is a good idea to spend whatever time it takes to head off such opposition.

6) Unanimous support from school district staff is not necessary, but major opposition on the school board is hard to overcome. School administrators should obtain the first yes votes among the board members.

7) General telephone campaigns are not helpful to the passage of bond issues. More people may vote as a result of such a tactic, but not necessarily in favor of the bond issue. The best most phone calls yield is 50-percent chance of a yes vote. Inasmuch as most elections require 60 percent yes for success, it is obvious that if the known yes vote is diluted with a large number of 50-50 voters, chances of passage are substantially decreased. Selective telephone campaigns to get out yes voters are, however, tremendously helpful.

8) Door-to-door campaigning is as effective as widespread telephoning.

9) Brochures are a waste of time because they are often too lengthly and develop negatives. If they are used, they should be distributed only to groups

whose vote is edging toward a yes. They should not be mailed.

10) Public meetings will not help pass issues, but they will increase total voter turnout.

11) Rides to the polls are not a good idea. If they are offered for a few cases, they should not be advertised.

A Checklist—Those who can answer yes to the items on this checklist can watch the polls close on election day knowing they have done their best.

_____ 1) Is the issue established as a need in the minds of the voters?
_____ 2) Has the school district achieved two-way, ongoing communications between the school and the community?
_____ 3) Is the total community involved with what the school is doing?
_____ 4) Is someone in charge of the school's public relations, either a professional or a competent volunteer?
_____ 5) Has the school district approached the issue positively?
_____ 6) Is the bond issue on a special election ballot?
_____ 7) Is election day a favorable day of the week?
_____ 8) Is it a favorable month?
_____ 9) Is it a favorable time of month?
_____ 10) Has there been favorable news coverage?
_____ 11) Is the campaign well-organized?
_____ 12) Were letters to the editor discouraged?
_____ 13) Did lay leaders help in developing the campaign but not in making professional educational decisions?
_____ 14) Did the professional staff make the educational decisions but not become involved in the campaign?
_____ 15) Was organized opposition discouraged?

Conclusion

An ongoing public relations program is the essential ingredient in winning public support, both financial and moral. It is essential that school district administrators have faith in the intelligence, common sense and sensitivity of the community. They must be open and honest with community members about their educational goals and decisions and work to involve them in the process at every level. They will be amply rewarded for their trust. They will continue to educate the children.

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Campaign Organization

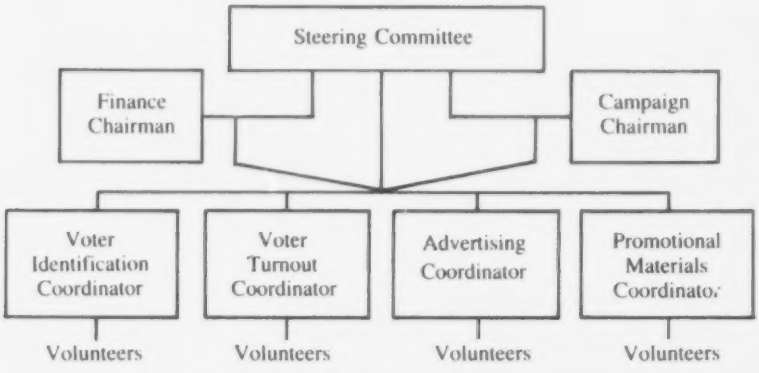

Table 1

Ohio School Bond Issues, 1972–76

Type	1972			1973			1974			1975			1976		
	Attempted	Passed	Percentage Successful	Attempted	Passed	Percentage Successful	Attempted	Passed	Percentage Successful	Attempted	Passed	Percentage Successful	Attempted	Passed	Percentage Successful
Bond issues	136	42	30%	154	52	33%	99	20	20%	76	17	22%	103	28	27%
Permanent improvement levies	15	5	33%	31	15	48%	51	24	47%	50	19	38%	62	25	40%
New operating levies	146	55	37%	170	72	42%	334	106	31%	123	35	28%	144	86	35%

Source: Ohio Education Association, Research and Development Division.

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Table 2

West Virginia School Bond Issues, 1972–77

County	Date	Percentage*	Amt. of Bond
Berkeley	1974	69.20%	$ 3,560,000
Boone	1977	81.10%	6,745,000
Brooke	1977	32.00%	-0-
Calhoun	1975	32.00 (2)%	-0-
Fayette	1973	76.10%	7,600,000
Gilmer	1976	53.56 (5)%	-0-
Hardy	1972	64.95%	950,000
Harrison	1975	54.06 (2)%	-0-
Jackson	1974	35.00%	-0-
Jefferson	1974	63.30%	1,520,000
Kanawha	1976	44.00%	-0-
Lincoln	1976	42.49 (2)%	-0-
McDowell	1974	73.00%	4,000,000
Marion	1976	58.70 (3)%	-0-
Marshall	1974	75.20%	4,350,000
Mineral	1973	78.14%	3,354,000
Monongalia	1976	66.78%	6,995,000
Monroe	1975	25.90%	-0-
Morgan	1974	76.99%	1,835,000
Nicholas	1975	70.01%	4,500,000
Ohio	1973	68.40%	14,235,000
Pleasants	1973	60.67%	1,800,000
Pocahontas	1976	35.07%	-0-
Preston	1976	57.28 (4)%	-0-
Putnam	1976	68.26%	5,795,000
Raleigh	1973	80.57%	7,760,000
Randolph	1974	64.35%	3,580,000
Ritchie	1973	47.00%	-0-
Roane	1976	54.07%	-0-
Taylor	1976	43.32 (2)%	-0-
Tucker	1975	60.26%	1,285,000
Tyler	1973	83.30%	1,855,000
Upshur	1973	70.80%	3,500,000
Wayne	1977	46.50%	-0-
Webster	1972	75.86%	1,535,000
Wetzel	1974	72.47%	4,955,000
Wirt	1975	27.60%	-0-
Wyoming	1977	57.90 (3)%	-0-

*In most cases where a bond issue failed, more than one election was held during the listed year. In these instances the figure given represents the highest percentage of the vote the issue garnered in any of the elections held. The number in parentheses is the number of elections held.

Source: West Virginia State Department of Education, Bureau of Planning, Research, and Development.

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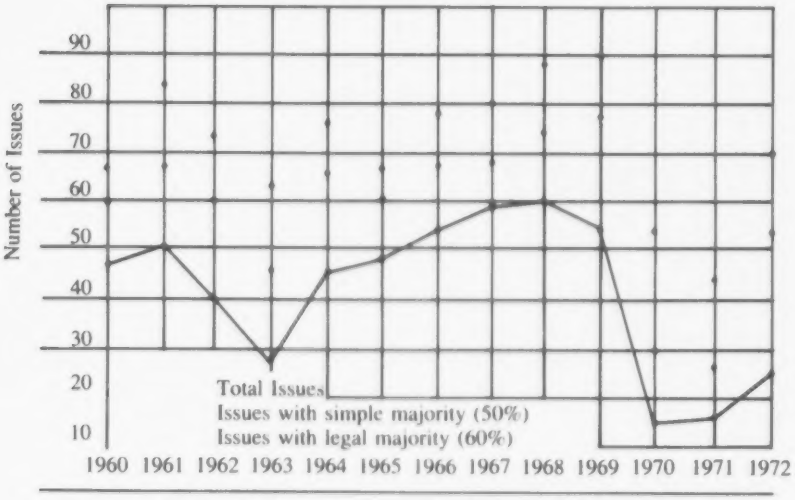
Table 3

Iowa School Bond Issues, 1960–72



Source: William Hukill, *Winning Bond Elections* (Cedar Rapids, Iowa).

Table 4

Percentage of Successful School Bond Issues by Month

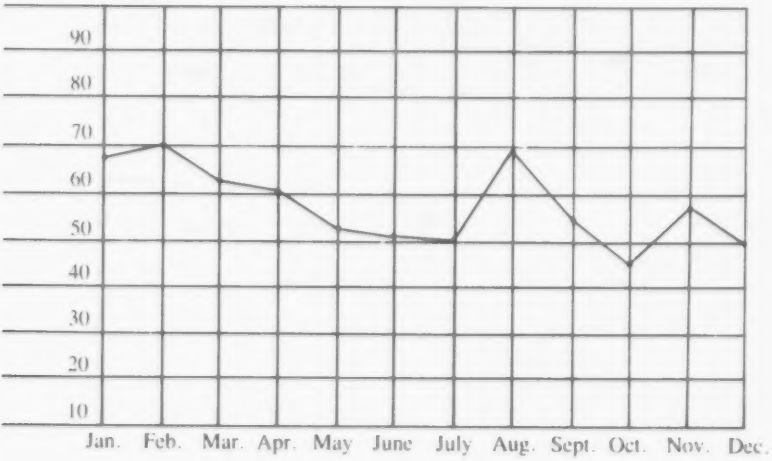


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Table 5

Percentage of Successful School Bond Issues by Days of the Month

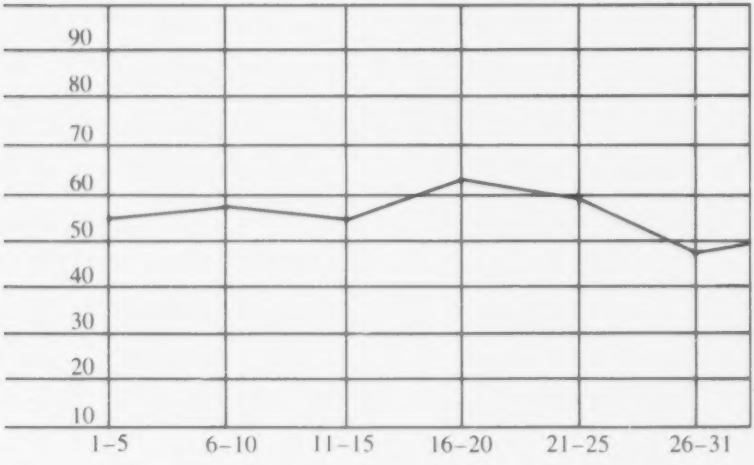
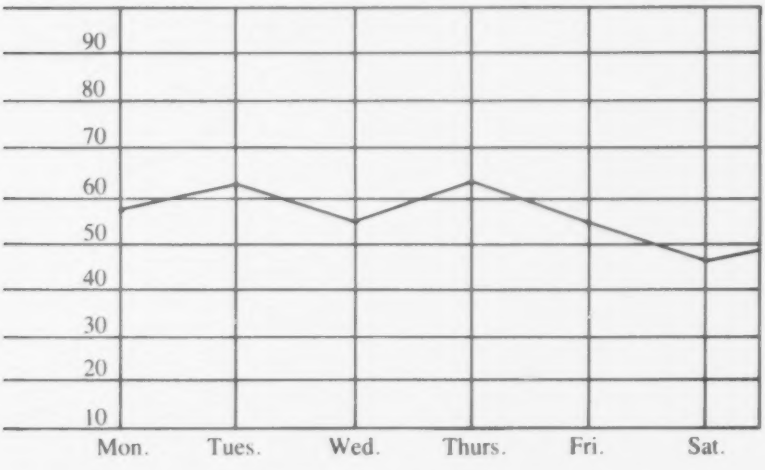


Table 6

Percentage of Successful School Bond Issues by Days of the Week



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Part Three
Alternative Funding

8

Alternative Sources of Revenues

Frederick L. Dembowski

AN IMPORTANT by-product of a school district comprehensive marketing plan is the opportunity to explore new avenues for obtaining additional revenues to support school district operations. School district revenues come from many different sources, chief among them state aid and property taxes. In addition to these traditional sources, a wide variety of innovative sources of revenues need to be explored.

This chapter has a threefold purpose. First, the need for additional revenues will be considered, primarily from a "devil's advocate" position. Second, many traditional sources of revenues will be described, with the intention of showing how they can be maximized. Third, new and alternative sources of revenues, primarily those made available through increased marketing activities, will be discussed at length.

Why Alternative Revenues

In a chapter of this nature, the first question that must be addressed is, Why seek alternative and additional revenues? Are they really the answer? Finding alternative sources of revenues for education may be analogous to a doctor treating a symptom and not the disease itself. The operation would be successful, but the patient could die.

Most school business officials need not be told that public education is facing a fiscal crisis that is, perhaps, unprecedented. Two of the primary causes of this crisis are the decline in public support for education and the scarcity of resources.

While recent national reports have brought education to center stage, public support for education has been declining for the past decade. The average taxpayer is increasingly politically aware and vocal in criticism. More important, criticism has become evident in the ever-increasing numbers of school district budget defeats across the country.

This trend has been exacerbated by the "Greying of America" phenomenon. The "Pepsi Generation" is out of school and no longer needs district services.

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While it is true that the birth rate is increasing once again, the "baby boomlet" to be expected is nowhere near the magnitude of the population explosion of the 1950s. It is well documented that less than 25 percent of the voting population have children in school. Education is no longer a high priority item for the majority of these voters, and unless school districts can become persuasive in their arguments for financial support or provide services to meet this population's educational needs, they cannot expect continued voter support. The decline in voter support and the decline in school-aged population have other effects that will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

Voter support for public education is also declining because the expectations for public education have exceeded the capability of the schools to produce. Society has given education the charge of addressing a wide range of social problems as well as teaching the three Rs. But while programmatic expansion has been mandated by the federal or state departments of education, additional revenues to support these mandates have not been forthcoming. Consequently, schools have been unable to meet all the expectations put upon them. Their failures are highly visible, while their successes often go unheralded. School districts seem to be a favorite target for the local media. Newspapers are constantly comparing test scores across districts and states, noting that the local district or state has fewer scholarships or students attending college or greater dropout rates and so forth. These comparisons are regarded as important, attention-getting news; seldom do student and district achievements receive as much attention. The national commissions of the early 1980s have highlighted the problems of the public education system, but who is heralding the successes? Surely the public schools of the nation are not that bad! Nevertheless, the problem of perceived educational inadequacy exists and must be dealt with.

As noted above, fewer people than ever have children in school, and many taxpayers are wondering what the schools are doing for them. What are they getting in return for their investment in education? The benefits of education are numerous. Thomas Jefferson wrote that no nation could remain both ignorant and free. The public education system provides private benefits by enhancing individual opportunities and public benefits by ensuring an educated citizenry. Higher educational levels increase productivity and improve the social environment. Education reduces the likelihood of unemployment, thus lowering welfare costs and increasing taxable income. Conversely, there is a strong relationship between the lack of education and criminal activity. In essence, the benefits of education permeate all aspects of social and economic activity. (For a complete discussion of the benefits of public education, see Gorms, 1978, Chap. 3.)

Finally, business and industry are becoming more involved in education and are publicly promoting the idea that schools should adopt the accountability and efficiency procedures and measures that govern their behavior. Unfortunately, this "production" approach does not work for schools. Schools can not control the quality of their raw materials (the children), and they have only an imperfect knowledge of the production processes at work in education. Yet the pressure for this approach continues.

Besides this general decline in support, the fiscal crisis faced by the public schools is exacerbated by the increasing scarcity of resources for education. Education is no longer the priority budget item in most states and provinces, and public education is being forced to compete for revenues with all other public

services. In the last decade in New York State, for example, state support for the public schools has dropped from approximately 46 percent of the average-wealth school district's budget to a low of approximately 28 percent, while the budgets for prisons have increased. While enrollments in the public schools decline, enrollments in private schools have increased. This trend is especially harmful for the public schools because most state aid allocation schemes are directly tied to enrollments. Finally the decline in the health of the economy in recent years has affected the tax revenues at the local, state and federal levels.

This is just a superficial picture of the public schools' fiscal crises and the problems and concerns that must be addressed. But the issue in question is whether alternative and additional sources of revenues can solve these problems. They will help in the short run, but for the long run these basic problems will remain.

Sources of School District Revenues

Despite the fact that infusions of money into public educational system will not solve its basic maladies, the relationship between the problems and the sources of school district revenues need to be examined and some basic policy questions asked. If, for example, school districts have declining enrollments, why should they be given more money? The answer to this question requires an in-depth examination of the sources of school district revenues and the way in which revenue allocations to districts are determined.

The basic sources of school district revenues are state aid allocations and property taxes (Garms, 1978). Most state aid allocation schemes are based on a count of pupils attending public schools in the school district. As enrollments go down, state aid revenues decrease. Most states have adopted mechanisms, however, that provide a degree of protection for the districts that experience severe declines in enrollments. These mechanisms, sometimes called "save harmless" provisions, are necessary because it is often not possible to adjust district expenditures sufficiently to offset this loss of revenue. Districts are not able, for example, to lay off teachers in response to enrollment decreases because of contractual agreements and the fact that enrollment decreases are not uniform across age or subject area groupings. Thus it may be several years before enrollments decrease sufficiently to justify an adjustment in the work force in particular class or subject area or before retirement permits a restructuring of the teacher pool.

Another type of "save harmless" provision is concerned not with enrollment decreases but with changes in district wealth. This provision ensures that no school district will receive less state aid than it did the previous year. Some districts in New York State, for example, whose wealth has increased relative to the wealth of the state as a whole having been receiving "unearned" aid for as much as 10 years, as a result of the "save harmless" provision. This kind of "save harmless" provision has resulted in substantial amounts of increased revenues for school districts over the years.

A second major source of revenue for school districts is property taxes, which are based upon the property taxes, which are based upon the property wealth of the school district. While there are many inefficiencies in the assessment of property and the property tax is often seen as being a greater burden on low-

income groups, the property tax is regarded as a good tax for generating revenue for governmental units because of its revenue-generating ability and stability of yield. Except for school districts in states with tax limits, such as California and Massachusetts, or for certain classes of districts such as the city school districts in New York, most districts are relatively unrestrained in setting tax rates. Once the tax rate is set, however, it usually must be voted on in a referendum. At this point voter preferences greatly affect school district finances.

There are a number of ways in which school districts can influence the amount of revenues received from their property taxes. The first is to reduce the amount of delinquent or nonpayment of taxes by instituting a set of incentives for ensuring timely payments of both interest and penalties, much along the lines of the procedures the Internal Revenue Service uses for the personal income tax.

Another largely untapped source of potential revenues for school districts is investing surplus funds. Because of the unique nature of the timing and amounts of both state aid and property taxes school districts experience periods of surplus and deficit cash positions. In the periods of surplus, cash is available for investment in interest-bearing assets. Investment instruments available for school district use include 5.25 percent savings accounts, certificates of deposit and money market accounts. While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to describe all these opportunities, a brief description of the investment-borrowing process will serve as an indicator of the potential. (See also Dembowski, 1982.)

The primary task in a school district cash management program is to build as large a pool of surplus funds for as long as possible for investment purposes. The amount of cash in this pool may be increased by speeding up the collection of revenues and slowing down the disbursement of expenditures, with primary emphasis on the major sources of revenues and expenditures. The major district revenues are property taxes and state aid. The receipt of property tax revenues may be accelerated by instituting a "lock box" system for collection, using self-addressed prestamped envelopes, making arrangements with all local banks holding escrow accounts to make payments of taxes at the earliest possible date, giving discounts for early payment of taxes and using school district personnel for the collection of taxes to ensure control over the collection process. Of course all these procedures are only useful if the monies collected are invested immediately.

State aid collections may be accelerated through setting up deposit procedures with branch banks in the immediate locale of the bank from which the state aid checks are drawn, thereby reducing the time in the mail of the state aid payment. The use of wire transfers is ideal for this purpose but is prohibited in many states, primarily because the state comptroller is also utilizing the "float" of this cash. In some instances it may be to the district's advantage to send a courier to pick up the check and deposit it the same day. While this sounds trivial, note that the daily interest earnings of $1 million at 12 percent annual interest (a reasonable rate for a money market fund) is $328.76. School districts can also earn additional revenues by borrowing cash through a process called "arbitrage." If the current rate of interest for borrowing is 7 percent and the investment rate is 12 percent, a school district may borrow the cash it needs to cover period of deficit in September at the beginning of the fiscal year and pay it off at the end of the fiscal year. The borrowed cash is invested until needed, thereby earning interest revenues in excess of the interest needed to pay off the note because of the

difference in the borrowing and investing rates of interest. This process is widely used by school districts throughout the United States. Some school districts are reluctant to borrow, but arbitrage is an important cash management tool that should be considered. Other sources of revenues can be included in the development of a cash flow schedule for borrowing and investment. All of them can be enhanced by adopting a "marketing approach" to school district management.

The Marketing Approach

Many educational theorists believe that in times of true scarcity, marginal adjustments of policy are inadequate and major changes are necessary. In light of the current fiscal crisis faced by the public schools, educational managers have two alternatives. The first is to make marginal adjustments by retrenchment, seek additional revenues and, in general, "ride out the storm." This is at best a short-run solution, and it is very dangerous because ships have a tendency to sink in storms! The second alternative is to begin to assess institutional capabilities and limitations, to reassess the goals and functions of public education and, in general, to adopt a proactive, consumer-oriented managerial posture. The result of this process may provide a long-run solution to the district's financial problems. This alternative involves many key processes in the concept marketing. Marketing can no longer be viewed as the slick promotional campaigns of Madison Avenue or the huckstering of the "Music Man" in River City. Marketing is:

- a management process involving analysis, planning, implementation and control
- which manifests itself in carefully formulated programs to achieve desired responses
- helps organizations ensure their survival and continued health through serving their clients more effectively
- relies on designing programs in terms of target markets; needs and desires rather than the provider's personal tastes.

Educational institutions can no longer afford the luxury of providing all things to all people. Careful programmatic choices must be made. Marketing is the most viable way of accomplishing this task. Further, because all organizations engage in marketing in one form or another, the choice facing educational managers is not whether to market or not to market but whether to do it well or poorly.

Admittedly, there are problems with the direct implementation of a marketing approach to education:

1) There is no profit to use as measure. That makes it more difficult to develop goals and assess programmatic effectiveness. In addition most schools lack a set of agreed-on goals, partly because they have not critically examined what they can and cannot do.

2) Schools operate on limited budgets that constrict the resources available for marketing. The basic processes of budgeting and programming are in existence, however, and the marketing component would not add substantial increases to these processes.

3) Public education's benefits and costs are distributed unevenly across the population. This is one reason why marketing is so critical to educational management. In order to develop responsive programmatic efforts, knowledge of the client groups served is vital.

4) The public schools are under close public scrutiny and susceptible to both regulation and criticism. Effective marketing programs developed by educational institutions anticipated and are sensitive to these problems.

A comprehensive marketing model for the public schools has been discussed elsewhere in this volume. How can the marketing model help now? An examination of the model's components yields some direct applications for raising revenues.

In the searching for alternative resources for school district operations, three avenues should be explored: alternative revenue sources, methods of reducing current expenditures and ways of reducing the time required to conduct current operations.

Earlier in this chapter the problems caused by declining enrollments in the public schools were highlighted. These declines also provide some opportunities, however, for increased revenues through careful planning. The excess assets of the district may be leased. Districts that own unused property or have excess facilities have a variety of options available for managing these properties (California Coalition, 1984). Generating revenues from surplus school buildings and property is a complex process that requires a great deal of time, careful projection of long-term enrollment trends, identification of the revenue potential from a sale or lease, a plan for the sale or lease that matches revenues with anticipated budget requirements over time and the development of a strategy for using sites that is acceptable to surrounding communities. Some examples of possible uses of excess buildings are joint occupancy through renting vacant space in operating schools, leasing unoccupied schools or land, selling schools or land, long-term lease of buildings or trading land for income-producing property.

Other district assets may be used to generate additional revenues. District-provided services can be subcontracted. Many districts, for example, have large computer systems with capacities that exceed district needs. These school districts may consider contracting computer services to other districts or outside agencies. Food services, transportation services, athletic facilities, gymnasium space, handicapped programs and vocational education programs may also be subcontracted, and specialized personnel, such as nurses, speech and hearing specialists and truancy officers may be shared. Subcontracting often makes it possible for school districts to obtain special services they might not otherwise be able to afford.

A third potential source for alternative revenues is user fees. School districts can supplement their operating budgets by requesting user fees from students who participate in expensive programs. Sports teams for example, can be asked to pay for their uniforms. Many states require fees from students that use district-provided transportation.

Certainly there is much precedent for districts charging fees for adult and community-based programs in school facilities. For these programs, user fees can offset operational costs like utilities and custodial support. School assets may also be made available to the public during after-school hours on a user fee basis.

Charging parents or computer aficionados an hourly rate for use of the school's microcomputer labs at night and on weekends can pay for the computers themselves. User fees may also be charged for athletic facilities and other school equipment. Making school facilities available through user fees not only provides vitally needed revenues to support school operations but fosters greater community participation and interest in the schools as well.

In the same vein, school districts should consider expanding their curricular offerings beyond the traditional K-12 student populations. School districts have an experienced staff whose business is training, and many are offering adult retraining programs for local industry. One school district in New York State coordinated efforts with a local computer firm by purchasing the same line of microcomputers that the firm used and outfitting a complete training lab. Not only is the school district training its students on these computers and seeing them graduate and go directly to work for this firm, but the firm is using the lab and the teachers to train its employees in the latest innovations in computer hardware and software.

This kind of school district-community cooperation offers many benefits. One that is often overlooked is the promotion of charitable giving to the district. Businesses, community organizations and individuals who are involved in cooperative programs with the schools are donating cash, services, supplies and equipment like microcomputer hardware and software to school districts. Sometimes this giving is restricted to specific purposes, but much of it may be unrestricted. Some school districts now have endowment funds.

It is important to remember that corporate and individual giving does not occur in a vacuum. It takes more than a plea for voluntarism to increase charitable contributions. School districts need to work very closely with neighboring corporations. As a noted endowment specialist (MCAuley, 1984, p. 26) has put it:

> *As corporations get more involved in seeing the inside working of not-for-profit organizations, they are seeing more opportunities for providing gifts-in-kind, managements, marketing and other kinds of expertise that they have and that the not-for-profit organization often needs.*

One of a school district's most valuable assets is its teaching and administrative staff. These professionals have skills that can yield both professional and financial rewards for the district. A school district may, for example, encourage its personnel to seek training and research grants from corporations and foundations. Grant-supported projects allow school personnel to use their skills to good advantage. At the same time projects can help to defray district operating costs by paying overhead expenses. They can also give the district the opportunity to acquire equipment and supplies it might not otherwise be able to afford.

School district personnel can also be encouraged to establish school-business partnerships. Schools have had good working relationships with local business and industry for many years, and business and industry have supported scholarships for graduating seniors, work experience programs, summer youth employment programs and job fairs. This traditional relationship can be expanded to include award programs for outstanding teachers, equipment loans and direct participation in curriculum revision and instructional programs.

Many school districts have already moved in this direction. The Chicago Public School system is involved in a school-business partnership that involves 73 agencies providing 112 different programs with 86 schools. Activities include work-study programs for students, training sessions at the business sites, computer purchases for schools and instruction in basic skills by business people. In another effort, the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce, the school district and 500 local business firms have established programs that offer students exposure to careers in banking and a chance to improve their interviewing, business letter writing and journalism skills while participating in traditional work-study programs.

Volunteer programs also provide important additional resources for school districts. By relieving teachers from nonteaching chores and assisting them in the classroom, volunteers increase school productivity. The full benefits of volunteer programs are the subject of another chapter in this book, but it is important to note here that these programs often involve people such as senior citizens who would otherwise have no direct contact with the school district. Involving community members in school programs builds year-round, districtwide support for the public schools that is an important component of the marketing approach. Community support cannot be expected if the result of the budget planning process are announced to the public three weeks before the budget vote. The goals of the school district must be kept before all the district's constituencies throughout the year, and volunteer programs help achieve this.

Conclusion

While many of these suggestions may seem to have little or nothing to do with alternative sources of revenues, it must be remembered that the resources available to the district to support regular operations are increased three basic ways: by increasing revenues, by cutting costs while producing the same level of services and by reducing the time required to perform the same level of services. Although many school administrators focus entirely on the first method, the second and third may be the more beneficial to the district in the long run. Many strategies are not currently permitted under state law. If it can be demonstrated, however, that a law prevents a district from operating in an efficient manner and may actually be costing the district money, that is a persuasive argument for the state legislature to change the law.

Establishing alternative sources of revenues and other methods for reducing operating expenditures is difficult and time consuming. But while start-up costs are high, cost savings and increased revenues can be significant.

The marketing approach has one additional advantage. School districts have traditionally been loath to involve their communities in their programmatic and budgeting decision-making process. This, possibly more than any other factor, has turned large segments of the population against public education. People simply do not perceive how the schools benefit them. A marketing approach requires the active participation of the community in the affairs of the school district, and it is up to district administrators and teachers to initiate this process. It may ultimately prove to be the primary force behind a revival of public interest in, and the vitality of, public education.

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9

The School Foundation And Other Methods That Work

John Burl Artis

ALTERNATIVE FINANCING methods for schools have recently become a topic of widespread discussion. School districts across the country face ever-increasing budgetary constraints. At the same time they face a public with increased expectations for public schools. Bombarded by numerous national reports and commissions, school personnel are hearing a steady stream of public commentary for increased accountability and productivity. School boards are responding by increasing requirements and requesting even more diligent efforts from their educational employees.

This chapter examines several different kinds of alternative financing methods now being used by school districts to meet the financial challenges of restricted budgets and increased demands. Alternative financing methods have been a part of school life for a long time. Candy sales, magazine sales, raffles and car washes have often helped support aspects of educational programs. Now, however, other alternative financing methods are being created to reach out to the business and professional community and to various special and general interest groups to secure an even larger share of the school financial needs. School foundations and similar efforts on an individual school level are being considered and tried on an-ever increasing scale.

The Cedar Rapids Community School District in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, now has a school foundation, for example, modeled on similar efforts established across the country. Other alternative financing methods are being tried at the John F. Kennedy Senior High School in Cedar Rapids. The discussion that follows examines some of the issues and uses for these financing methods.

The Financial Situation in Iowa

In 1971 the Iowa legislature enacted Chapter 442 into law. More commonly known as the School Foundation Program, Chapter 442 was originally developed to ensure that all schools in the state would be guaranteed a certain funding level.

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Many local districts saw a significant increase in their state aid, and all districts in Iowa now had a chance regardless of property valuation, to have the financial resources to meet state educational standards.

Chapter 442 has several features. It establishes a uniform property tax levy requirement for all districts, a state foundation base, an annual growth formula, a process whereby low-spending districts can reach the state average and a guaranteed minimum state aid to all districts. Additionally, Chapter 442 places the schools in the unique position of being the only unit of government to have spending limits rather than tax-levying limits. The spending limits are established by state law, and schools are now dependent on the state legislature for their funds.

To put it succinctly, the state legislature controls the authorized budget for Iowa school districts through a formula based on district cost per pupil times enrollment, plus miscellaneous income and any unspent balance. The state legislature also controls the maximum revenues and resources for Iowa school districts through a formula based on property tax levies, plus state aid, miscellaneous income and any unspent balance. Further, a district may not spend more than its spending authority granted by the state legislature.

The basic thrust of Chapter 442—to equalize the funding capabilities of the school districts of the state of Iowa—has certainly been successful. Throughout the decade of the 1970s, when economic conditions were good in Iowa, the low-spending districts were aided in reaching a state minimum level of funding for their schools. At the same time, the traditionally high-spending districts continued to be able to have the funding necessary to support top quality educational programs.

During the last few years, however, there has been a significant downward trend in the economy of the state of Iowa and a steady decrease in student enrollments. These two factors have placed an increasing financial strain on Iowa school districts. There has been a decrease in the school aid based on enrollment and a lower limit for financial growth of each district established by the state legislature.

To illustrate the problem, let us examine the Cedar Rapids Community School District in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Cedar Rapids, a city of 110,000, has three public high schools, an alternative public high school, six junior high schools and 23 elementary schools. The school budget for 1983-84 was in the vicinity of $56 million. In late June 1983 the school district found that the state spending authorization had been reduced. Consequently, during July and August of that year, school administrators faced the dilemma of having to reduce the school budget by nearly $2 million without any personnel reductions; all contracts had already been settled with the various employee groups and individual work assignments determined.

Again in 1984–85 the school district faced a severely restricted state authorization level for budget increases. The district could increase its spending level by less than 2 percent over the 1983–84 level. At the same time it had already negotiated settlements with various employees groups for 4–5 percent increase in salary, absorbed 8 and 9 percent utility increases and withstood 10 percent increases in book and instructional material costs.

As a result of this crisis, the administrators of the Cedar Rapids Community School District had to take some drastic measures for the 1984–85 school year.

Administrative and instructional staff were reduced, school programs were reduced or eliminated, available supplies and materials were reduced, buildings were closed for short periods of time and students and their parents were asked to bear a large portion of the financial cost of participating in academic and co-curricular programs.

At the same time the public was challenging the district to produce a better academic product. Schools across the nation face similar financial challenges. While funds have decreased, demands for more rigid graduation requirements have increased. So have demands for more computer education, for more attention to gifted and talented education and for even more extensive co-curricular activities programs.

In short, the Cedar Rapids Community School District, like school districts everywhere, has been challenged to do more and to do it better. Administrators and school board members in Cedar Rapids realized that the demands for excellence were not going to be met by the state-approved funds for the district. They decided they had to find alternative funding sources if they were to save the successful school programs already in existence and improve the school offerings to meet the growing demands of an active public.

The Cedar Rapids Community School District Foundation

One of the ways the Cedar Rapids Community School District choose to meet some of its financial needs was to create a Cedar Rapids Community School District Foundation. The foundation was incorporated as a nonprofit organization on November 17, 1983, and was granted nonprofit status by the state of Iowa and the Internal Revenue Service the same year. Its stated purpose is to "improve the quality of education in the Cedar Rapids Community Schools by generating, accepting, administering and allocating funds for special programs and projects, and for any other purpose that lends itself to non-traditional funding (Cedar Rapids Community School District Board of Education, 1983).

In the state of Iowa, educational foundations are controlled by the Iowa Nonprofit Corporation Act contained in Chapter 504A of the Code of Iowa. For purposes of the incorporation, the Cedar Rapids Community School District Foundation has as its purposes an intention to operate exclusively for charitable, scientific and educational purposes and to maintain, develop, increase and extend the facilities and services of the school district, to solicit and receive by gift, grant, devise or bequest, and to acquire by purchase, lease, exchange or otherwise, property as owner or trustee, and to manage and administer, and to make contributions, grants, gifts and transfer of property to or for the benefit of the Cedar Rapids Community School District. In addition the activities of the corporation cannot be involved in carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any political candidate for public office.

Specific powers are provided to the foundation to acquire, receive and hold property, as trustee for the use and benefit of the school district, and to apply for, receive and administer grants, gifts and gratuities made to or for the benefit of the district. There is a board of trustees for the foundation consisting of no fewer than 13 members and no more than 19. Board members are nominated by the board of directors of the Cedar Rapids Community School District and then

elected by the members of the board of trustees for the foundation at the annual meeting. One-third of the board of trustees are nominated and elected each year. School board members may not serve on the foundation's board.

An annual meeting is held in November of each year. Other special meetings can be held on the request of the president of the foundation or two members of the board. Between annual or special meetings, necessary business is handled by the executive committee, which consists of the officers including the president, one or more vice-presidents, a secretary who must be a school district administrator, a treasurer and other officers who from time to time may be authorized by the board of trustees. The present secretary for the foundation is the deputy superintendent of schools for the Cedar Rapids Community School District.

The present board of trustees for the foundation has been selected to represent the business community, educational community, racial and ethnic community, professional community and various service club organizations in Cedar Rapids. In addition to representing these various constituencies and the geographical sections of the city, the board is purposefully balanced in terms of males and females.

Each board member serves on one of four committees—the executive committee, public relations committee, allocations committee or the ways and means committee. In addition, there is a finance committee. Each of the committees has specific goals and objectives for the year. In 1984 the public relations committee had as its task researching professional advertising help in creating an image for the foundation, planning a public relations campaign to address long- and short-term giving, determining an operating budget for the year and planning for the recognition of donors.

The allocations committee worked to develop a statement addressing the projects the foundation may fund in the coming year, procedures for screening and recommending appropriate foundation projects and initiating an ongoing assessment of the possibilities for the foundation's impact, using input from students, parents, administrators, teachers, principals and citizens.

The ways and means committee had as its responsibility determining methods for raising long- and short-term funds; offering to the community plans for continuous giving, special interest giving, general giving and bequests; raising $18,300 for the year ($1 per student); identifying for the foundation's audience levels of giving with a framework for continuous giving; and determing procedures for endorsing fundraising efforts for the foundation.

The board of trustees for the Cedar Rapids Community School District Foundation had three major goals for 1983-84. First it determined to establish its operating procedures, identify its giving audience and publicize its efforts to the entire community and those segments most likely to support foundation efforts. Second, it set a fundraising goal of at least $18,300 and determined to use those funds to finance the purchase of computers for a district computer bank available to individual schools through a check-out procedure. Third, it set a goal to establish and finance a district retirement recognition program.

After nearly two years of operation, the Cedar Rapids Community School District Foundation has successfully begun to help the Cedar Rapids Community School District to improve its financial situation as a means of improving the public schools. After the initial year of operation, the foundation had some $7,390 in operating funds, and the board of trustees set a goal of $18,300 for

following year. The foundation has begun to offer alternative funding for special school projects and purchases that would otherwise lose out during the current budget crunch.

The board of trustees anticipates that it will someday sponsor special teacher workshops, curriculum revision efforts by teachers and others, special programs that serve a small number of students and the purchase of equipment not possible through the regular budget. In the future teachers will be able to apply to the foundation, individually or in small groups, for grants to study special problems related to school operation or the curriculum. The foundation will also purchase high-tech equipment.

Issues in Establishing School Foundations

By establishing the foundation, the Cedar Rapids Community School District followed a path taken by other school districts in California, New York, New Jersey, Florida, Arizona, Kansas, Ohio, Oregon, Washington, D.C., and, of course, Iowa. Many other states are also quickly moving toward legislation allowing the establishment of school district foundations. All of these foundations have to face two issues vital to the success of the school foundation movement. First, school foundations must determine how they can serve as a link between the schools and the entire community. This link must be predicated on a belief that the foundation as a representative of the community can have a real effect on the quality of the public schools. Second, foundations must not lose sight of their ability to influence local and state directions toward better education for all students. Foundations provide a vehicle for those who wish to give funds to demonstrate to local governments what they consider important for the schools. School foundations can never fully fund the needs of the schools, but by funding special projects, they can draw the public's attention to certain school needs.

There are other important questions a community will need to consider in planning a school foundation (Neill, 1983). Among them is, first of all, why the school district should establish a foundation. One way to answer that question is to look at the successes of university development offices. Tax advantages for the donor and the flexibility to target funds for specific school programs provide clear advantages for those who want to influence the quality of the public schools. School foundations provide a link between the schools and the community and opportunities for teachers to get support for special projects that a district cannot fund.

A second question the community must consider is, what the relationship between the foundation, the board of education and the district superintendent should be. Foundations are separate corporations outside the direct jurisdiction of either the school board or the school administrators. School board members are generally excluded from these governing boards. Yet the foundation has the power to influence school programs and may even push programmatic directions not considered vital by the district administration or school board. Some school foundations may become more accountable to the primary donors than to the leadership of the schools or the parents. Many school districts, like the one in Cedar Rapids, attempt to counter this lack of coordination by stipulating that a school administrator serve on the foundation's governing board. By whatever

form, a foundation will succeed much more readily if the school district administration is represented on the foundation board and its relationship with the superintendent supportive but independent.

Other questions that a community must address include: How much money should a school district plan on as a result of the foundation? How should the foundation approach fundraising?

The experience of the Cedar Rapids Community School District Foundation and similar foundations indicates that no school district should plan on a foundation being able to raise significant portions of the financial needs of the district. Businesses, corporations and private donors usually give to a variety of community causes. The foundation in Cedar Rapids has worked hard to encourage people to make it a beneficiary. Still, in a school district with a $56 million plus budget, a foundation should never realistically expect to raise much above $100,000.

Foundation fundraising must be approached from at least two directions—methods to establish sustained giving and methods to finance special limited projects. Foundations need a supportive relationship with local chambers of commerce, local service clubs and local or national philanthropists. In addition foundations have to publicize special projects of interest to local individuals and groups and appeal to them through direct one-to-one soliciation.

School foundations typically support a variety of special projects to aid the public schools. Examples include purchasing computer hardware and software; sponsoring theater arts programs, global studies and global awareness programs and writing skills centers; and awarding small grants to individual schools or teachers to study problems they have identified. Some school foundations offer scholarships to individual students and pay for the in-service costs for a school staff.

School foundations are definitely a positive approach to alternative financing for school districts. They can fund projects that a school district might otherwise have to set aside during these times of economic depression for schools. They provide opportunities for positive links between the school and local business and professional leaders. School foundations also give local citizens a chance to have a direct impact on their school districts. They channel local philanthropy toward improving the quality of life in the community. Through direct appeals to the volunteer spirit within a local community, a school foundation can operate with little or no overhead, and its trustees can guarantee donors that funds will directly benefit schools, teachers and students.

Other Alternative Financing Methods

Local school foundations cannot provide all the funds lost to school districts through severe budget reductions, however. They are often limited by law to helping the entire school district. Such is the case in Cedar Rapids, and while the Cedar Rapids Community School District Foundation is a positive avenue for providing alternative funding for district schools, the districtwide emphasis limits the foundation's impact on any single school.

The administrators of the district's John F. Kennedy High School have been extremely supportive of the efforts of the school district foundation. At the same time they and the teachers of Kennedy High School have had to seek other

alternative financing methods to meet the school's varying financial needs. Kennedy High School is only one of three public high schools in Cedar Rapids, which, together with all district schools, receive funds known as building control accounts from the district. These funds are based on enrollment and available financing from the state of Iowa. Obviously, as the state has cut the district budget, the building control account of Kennedy High School has also been cut.

The administrators, teachers and local school constituency (parents and students) have begun the difficult process of deciding what so-called frills can be cut from the Kennedy High School building control account and what is absolutely necessary for continued operation of a quality high school. At the present time Kennedy High School, like many high schools, relies heavily on fundraising efforts by such groups as sports boosters and band boosters as well as selling efforts by students. The school is also identifying other elements in the school program that will have to be financed through alternative means.

One area that will draw heavily on alternative financing methods in the future is the school library. After reviewing the cuts made in the library budget, school administrators decided to pursue several alternative funding efforts. First librarians are asking faculty members to give the library the magazines and journals to which they subscribe. The libraries acknowledge these gifts with a statement at year's end that the donor can use for income tax purposes. Second, the library is creating a friends group. Letters will be sent to local businesses and community leaders asking them to purchase a magazine or newspaper subscription or a book for the library. In return, the library will acknowledge the donor's name on the cover of the magazine or book and display the names of donors prominently in the library. One local business might, for example, purchase a subscription to the *New York Times* and donate it to the library.

Similarly, the school orchestra has created a friends group with various levels of giving. Individuals or groups may become "friends," "sponsors" or "patrons," depending on how much they are willing to give. Those who do give are listed in orchestra programs. Donations are used to purchase music, instruments, uniforms and student scholarships to musical camps.

Another example of alternative financing of school programs at Kennedy High School involves the athletic program. As is the case in many schools, ticket sales for football and basketball help defray the costs of many of other so-called minor sports programs. Recently football ticket sales were down, and, of course, the district has had to cut its support for athletics due to budget restraints. To increase football ticket sales, the three public high schools in Cedar Rapids will offer local companies package ticket sales or promotional techniques. If a company buys a block of tickets for a particular football game, the game will be advertised as company game night on the programs and through the media. The company may give the tickets to its employees or sell them at a reduced rate. Proceeds from the block sale packages will be divided equally by the three high schools in Cedar Rapids.

A final alternative method for financing supports the high school's industrial arts department. Some six years ago the industrial arts instructors began to experience budget limitations After spending the normal time complaining and worrying about the restrictions and their impact on programs, the instructors decided to create a company called Cougarland. Cougarland operates two businesses: one is a donut sale service each morning; the other is a manufacturing

firm mass producing plastic cutting boards and telephone stands for local businesses. Both are conducted by industrial arts instructors and students, and all company profits are used to buy equipment for the industrial arts department. Cougarland operates within the framework of the school accounting system, and all monies are accounted for by the school bookkeeper. The company generates somewhere between $1,000 and $2,000 per year and has purchased computers, specific tools and supplies for the industrial arts department.

Conclusion

To use the various alternative financing methods discussed in this chapter, a school district must first decide what elements of its comprehensive program will receive the priority expenditures from the tax dollars provided. Budget cutbacks place schools in the unenviable position of deciding what will be considered essential and what will be cut from school programs.

Second, the school district must decide what elements of its programs might legitimately be funded by appealing to various special interest groups. As alternative financing is considered, the school district must have an idea about how funds might be used. Processes for determining need and disbursing funds from alternative financing need to be laid out. Furthermore, the school district must decide how to market its program and needs to the general public and to special interest groups.

Third, if the school district intends to use alternative financing, the district officials must be prepared to listen to a broad spectrum of opinion in the community. If the community perceives the school decision-making process as closed, there will be few contributions towards alternative financing for schools. In addition, when a school district does use alternative financing, it must understand that not every attempt to raise needed monies will succeed. School districts must be willing experiment in seeking ways to meet their financial needs through other than public tax dollars.

The public schools of America must seek out alternative financing in order to continue to offer quality education. Critics often legitimately point up shortcomings in public schools but the correction of those shortcomings costs money. Those of us in the school business must determine how to correct those shortcomings at the same time that we face the reality that funds for schools will not be significantly increased. We must use our energies to create alternative financing mechanisms. We must broaden our appeal to a wider audience in our community and seek community help for special programs of interest in our schools.

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10

School District Volunteer Programs

Sandra T. Gray

AT A TIME when schools are being required to cut costs, often by reducing staff, the school volunteer program is growing. Individual citizens, community organizations and local business and industry are offering time and services that can ease the business officer's problems of trying to maintain the quality of school programs with reduced resources.

Take productivity, for example. Volunteers increase productivity by extending the reach and the effect of the paid staff. When tutoring individual children, or working with small groups in the classroom, volunteers reinforce the lessons taught by the teacher and allow the teacher to move to other activities. When volunteers shelve books in the library, stand playground duty, help in the cafeteria or work in the school office, they make it possible for paid staff to do more specialized or technical work. In short, with volunteers, the school district gets more for the money it allocates for each employee.

School districts also observe another kind of productivity improvement from volunteer programs. Teachers who were tired or "burned out" say their contacts with professionals—scientists, mathematicians, lawyers, doctors, architects, journalists—who come into the school as volunteers reinvigorate and stimulate them to begin learning again. This is an informal type of in-service program for teachers, at no cost to the district. In other cases school-business partnerships lead to formal in-service training programs at no cost to the school system.

Volunteers, by definition, work without pay. Volunteer programs are not "free," however. It costs something in time and money to organize and run them. But some school districts find it instructive to estimate the dollar value of volunteer time on some kind of hypothetical pay scale such as the minimum wage, professional salary or the fee a professional person would charge. The money value of volunteer services also can be thought of as the value of the teacher's time saved by the volunteer's presence to perform.

The volunteers' free service also can be measured in terms of student achievement. Volunteers working with students one-on-one or in small groups supplement regular class activities in reading, mathematics, sciences or the arts. Students often gain several levels of competence in a school year. Teachers say this type of achievement growth happens even if the volunteer is simply a friend

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or listener who raises a child's self-esteem and confidence by paying attention and showing interest in his or her accomplishments.

Many volunteer programs now draw heavily on people rarely seen in schools before. True, the majority of volunteers are parents as they always have been, but retired people are among the best volunteers. At a time when many people do not have children in school, volunteering is a way for the community to become aware of the school's needs, problems and accomplishments. Invariably volunteers become boosters who will vote accordingly when the school asks for a millage increase or floats a bond issue.

Many school districts have developed volunteer partnerships with local businesses, which increasingly give their employees "release time" to work in the schools on a regular basis, such as a half-day each week or month. There are no better advocates for upgrading science laboratories than professional scientists who come to lecture and find that the lab has no modern equipment. "They had nothing but Bunsen burners!" one shocked high-tech scientist told his company. Contributions of equipment, materials and money frequently follow the business volunteer into a school. Volunteers have also persuaded many companies to open their laboratories or business offices so students can become familiar with equipment beyond the budget reach of the school system. Many businesses are also offering management and financial help to school systems.

Thus, any weekday in this country today, you will find many outside of the usual school population involved in making one of the greatest education systems in the world work better and more effectively.

In Houston, corporate America is actively engaged in the city's school system. Tenneco Oil, for example, weekly flies in professors from the University of Texas to teach a geology course designed at the corporation's expense for students at the high school for engineering professions. Shell Development conducts workshops for math and science teachers of the gifted to expose them to what the future scientist will be required to know. Other major corporations like Southwestern Bell and Rockwell International are among the 66 firms that formed partnerships with 63 of Houston's public schools during 1983. More than 600 individuals gave of their most precious resources—time and talent—at an estimated value of half a million dollars.

In Fairfax County, Virginia, 20 corporations have signed on to a program that helps teachers make the transition from the classroom to the high-tech world so that they, in turn can help their students become computer literate in an era with a heavy concentration of information services firms. Through the Superintendent's Business/Industry Council, formed in late 1982, teachers are learning about school applications of the new technology and getting a feel for the potential job market for their students. AT&T Long Lines, for example, includes public school teachers at no cost in its employee training sessions on the use of the PLATO computer-assisted instructional system. Satellite Business Systems opens its word-processing center at night to train business teachers in the use of the latest equipment. Students are also taking part in evening training sessions, taught by the newly trained teachers. Arthur Anderson, another local corporation, has invited school personnel to join its clients and employees in a microcomputer course at its Fairfax County headquarters. The council also has created the Fairfax County Public Schools Education Foundation, Inc.—a nonprofit, tax-exempt body that accepts and administers donations of money, prop-

erty and services. Its goal is to enlist the private sector in a countrywide campaign to improve every aspect of public education.

Equally exciting things are happening across the country. The Corporate Action in Public Schools Program is one of several volunteer efforts in San Francisco. It takes public school teachers into corporate and business settings to give them a vision of what their students will need to know to make it in today's demanding workplace. A science teacher at Galileo High School spent the summer of 1983 at McKesson Corporation's research and development laboratory, solving problems involving the chemical recycling of solvents. A mathematics teacher at John O'Cannell High School worked at the transportation research center operated by Southern Pacific, developing algebraic formulas to explain changes in railroad traffic. A mathematics teacher at Francisco Middle School learned how the subject she teaches is used in large corporations through her work in the revenue accounting office of Analytic Services.

One teacher who participated in the San Francisco program commented that "It's been 30 years since I had a job other than teaching. Now I know what current business tasks are like. I know what qualifications my students need to develop for their future work." Another teacher participant discerned through this same project that school science programs had become, in a word, "primitive." These lessons are pluses in an educational system sorely in need of a boost.

These samples are proof that innovation and the will to do nontraditional things provide opportunities that can and do enhance education at all levels. They are part of what John Goodlad had in mind about volunteerism in his book, *A Place Called School*. "Such options," he says, "for both supporting the educational process in schools and strengthening community involvement in educating the young become feasible only when we allow our minds to escape from the fetters of conventional thinking about our schools."

There is no doubt that the school facing budget challenges at every turn and suffering through staff shortages would gain from volunteer programs like these. For teachers, who now feel swamped by the many chores that diminish their actual teaching time, the benefits can be both mind-expanding and professionally satisfying. A volunteer can team with a teacher for instructional purposes, provide in-service training and current information regarding course content, help curriculum supervisors expand and revise the curriculum, give students access to special skills and expertise, lend the perspective of another adult in the classroom setting and another insight into student behavior, ensure more time for the student who needs individual attention, assist in the demanding tasks of preparing lessons and correcting student papers and provide relief from record-keeping and other nonteaching chores. All of these contribute to the professional development for the teacher.

In addition, volunteers often provide stimulation for teachers to begin learning again. The teachers who grow are those who have created their own networks—those sets of personal contacts and resources that help them meet their own continuing special needs to learn and improve. That stimulation often comes from the volunteer network, for volunteers are by definition people who not only want to help but who enjoy learning from one another.

Volunteer programs help reduce isolation of the public schools from the general community. They restore and build public confidence in the schools;

enhance and support programs, teachers and other school system personnel; and frequently generate money to help and enrich school initiatives. Volunteer efforts also bring to education a contribution that is not always fully recognized. The attention that community people, business and industry give to the schools, in addition to their contributions of time, talent, services, material gifts and money, carries an important message. It tells students, teachers and administrators: "We believe that what you are doing is crucial and, yes, education does matter."

The Elements of Partnership

While these sketches seem a simple scenario, a society that thrives on five-minute pizza, instant mashed potatoes, the zap of a microwave, the lightning speed of a computer and rapid transit systems will undoubtedly be looking for instant educational successes in such projects and relationships. However, such projects require superb planning and negotiation, finetuning, training and coordination and inordinant amounts of both commitment and perseverance on the part of all those involved.

Volunteering is no longer "a nice thing to do." It is a planned and directed part of a school's operation. Voluntarism is taking on new sophistication in management. To assure accountability, good volunteer programs assign workers to a task, in the classroom or elsewhere, only after the task's expected outcome has been defined and some system established for determining how well task objectives are met.

Volunteer services are more consistent and effective when the programs are placed within the existing governance systems of participating school districts. Successful volunteer programs are not add-ons, but integral parts of, instruction, curriculum, staff development, administration and school management. Such programs become institutionalized (which makes them powerful assets for children) when the following seven factors are present.

Top-Level Support—The school board and the superintendent should express their strong support for volunteer activities by providing a line item in the budget for volunteer programs. The superintendent can also create an atmosphere in which principals and teachers feel comfortable about making changes that will enable them to use volunteers effectively. Visible support from presidents and chief executive officers of business and civic organizations also improve the chances that a volunteer program will succeed.

A Written Policy of Support—The school board should approve a formal, written policy of support for the program. Such a policy can quickly overcome the traditional barriers that keep volunteers out of such aspects of school life, as management, curriculum development, instruction and in-service training programs.

A Systemwide Manager—Placing one person in charge of managing volunteers often spells the difference between an effective enterprise and a floundering exercise in amateurism. This manager (who should report directly to the district superintendent) personifies the commitment of a school system to a genuine partnership with the community it serves. A systemwide manager also enables a school system to use its volunteers efficiently, because the manager will facilitate the sharing of information and the coordinating of arrangements between de-

partments or schools. If one school has access to a community resource, a systemwide manager will see that other schools in the system have access to that same resource. A systemwide manager also provides business and community leaders with an easily accessible contact for cooperation with the schools. In many cases the systemwide manager is a paid school district employee and may have a staff of his or her own. The manager usually has office space in a district administration building and access to the district's phone lines, computers and copying machines. He or she is expected to submit an annual report and may publish training manuals or other materials.

Building Level Managers—The systemwide manager should make certain that each school principal designates a staff member to carry out such tasks as a schoolwide needs assessment (to determine where volunteers could best be used and which students would be the most appropriate target populations); the identification of potential community resources; and the development, implementation and evaluation of a volunteer program for the school. This building-level manager would also take responsibility for recording the hours spent and the types of services performed in the school by volunteers, creating awareness among the staff and the school community regarding the potential benefits of participation in the volunteer program and recruiting, interviewing, training, assigning and recognizing the achievements of school volunteers. The building-level manager should have release time for these program-related duties or be a full-time building-level coordinator.

People—Effective school volunteer programs focus on involving people, not on procuring money. When local scientists, business leaders, engineers, accountants, civic and governmental leaders, parents, senior citizens and others form partnerships with the schools, they bring personal talents and commitments that improve education in ways that money alone cannot. Of course it costs companies money to release their staff members for volunteer activities during the workday and to assign one employee responsibility for coordinating the program—but most find that the investment pays dividends in better employee morale and improved community relations. For the schools, on the other hand, effective volunteer programs boost public confidence in U.S. education. The annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitude toward the Public Schools has repeatedly shown that people are more supportive—financially and otherwise—of social institutions with which they have direct contact.

Options for Volunteers—The roles of volunteers in the schools need not be confined to raising funds and providing clerical assistance. Other options include service as tutors, mentors or resource instructors (working closely with teachers); staff developers (covering such topics as new technologies or new management techniques); technical advisers (handling such areas as administration or management); and members of various kinds of advisory boards. Carefully chosen volunteers can add both breadth and depth to school enrichment programs. Volunteers can sometimes play important roles in a school's counseling program, particularly in such areas as attendance, career guidance, alcohol or drug abuse programs and kindergarten screenings. They can also make valuable contributions as members of committees established to update or revise curricula.

Collaborative, Long-Range Planning—Organizations and institutions survive over the long haul only if their leaders understand the importance of systematic

long-range planning. School volunteer programs should be the objects of such planning efforts, but school volunteers should also be actively involved in the long-range planning that affects other dimensions of a school's operations—from curriculum and instruction to management. Only by active collaboration with teachers and administrators in these planning activities can school volunteers discover how they can contribute most effectively to the ongoing improvement of the school and its program.

The Steps to Partnership

Close examination of a large number of school volunteer programs—some successful, some not—has made clear the steps by which effective school-community partnerships can be developed.

1) *Create Awareness*—School and civic leaders who would like to develop a partnership should let their interest in and commitment to this project be widely known. The goal is to make employees of local businesses and other local citizens aware of the ways in which their special interests and abilities can help to solve school problems and improve school programs.

2) *Identify Needs*—Those individuals who wish to develop a school-community partnership should next identify school, corporate and community needs that could be served by such a partnership.

3) *Establish Program Goals*—Program goals should be mutually developed and agreed upon by each group involved in the partnership: the school system, parents, participating businesses and the general public. For example, one program goal for the school system might be to involve employees with the schools in personally gratifying ways that also improve the image of the corporation within the community.

4) *Develop Program Objectives*—The developers of a partnership should next specify in writing what the program will accomplish, with whom and by when.

5) *Identify Potential Resources*—The next step is to identify those individuals—from companies, the community, nearby colleges or universities, the school system, the local pool of senior citizens—whose talents will be useful in planning and implementing the program.

6) *Develop the Program Design*—Program developers should analyze the elements that characterize model programs, identify administrative procedures to implement their own program and write job descriptions for volunteers, teachers, systemwide and building managers and the program staff.

7) *Implement the Program*—This phase involves recruiting, screening, training, assigning and then recognizing the successful efforts of volunteers. It also involves training the teachers and administrators who will be participating in the program.

8) *Evaluate the Partnership*—Finally, program developers should collect and interpret data to determine the strengths, weaknesses and accomplishments of the program. Have the program objectives been achieved? Evaluation efforts should be both informative and summative. Formative evaluation makes it possible to improve the program as it evolves, while summative evaluation provides the hard evidence of program successes that will encourage continued and expanding support for the school-community partnership.

9) *Public Relations*—The public relations staff of the school district can also help to foster support for the program by systematically sharing the program's successes with the local media, school personnel and the school community. Promotions, awards and other kinds of recognition for the volunteers, administrators and teachers are also essential to the success of a school volunteer program.

Conclusion

If it functions as an integral part of the total program, a school volunteer program can make a significant contribution to school management, academic achievement, school finance, public confidence in education and the economic health of the entire community. Never in the history of U.S. education have such institutionalized partnerships between schools and their communities been more crucial.

Resources

The National School Volunteer Program, Inc., headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia, is a membership organization of local volunteer programs and individuals. It provides management training and technical assistance to school systems and local communities in forming effective partnerships for volunteer activity. The address and phone number are 701 N. Fairfax St., Alexandria, Va. 22314; (703) 836-4880.

Part Four
Marketing School Services

11

Marketing through Community Service

James Fritts

SCHOOL DISTRICTS that are successful in attracting young families and enlisting the support of their communities for funding are often characterized by a strong philosophy and program of community service. This chapter examines some of the marketing factors and management issues associated with three community service programs: transportation services, food services and an area recently entered by market-oriented school districts—child care services.

The potential market for these three services can be imagined by considering a typical community that may have developed rapidly during the period following World War II, undergone subsequent school population decreases during the 1970s and 1980s and is now settled into a pattern of lower but stable school enrollments. School facilities, despite the closing of some schools, may be partially underutilized. State funding based on enrollments has probably declined sharply; the local tax base must therefore support an increasing proportion of school expenses. Services for children offered by community agencies such as park districts must compete for funds with programs for older residents. New families in the district are struggling financially to afford housing in the community, both parents may work or there may be only one parent living with the children.

Demands on the school for community services increase while the proportion of school expenditures funded from outside the community may be decreasing. The school district is thus faced with developing a strategy for providing, funding and managing activities that attract and meet the needs of the young families necessary to a vital community while assuring adequate funding and support for the central mission of the schools—providing educational excellence. Whether a school district has previously offered such community service programs as transportation or food services, or whether it is venturing into these programs or into child care as new ventures, certain management decisions and problems will need to be addressed. Among the questions that should be considered in planning to initiate or expand community service activities are the following.

1) Does the proposed community service program complement, or at least not detract from, the central mission of the schools? Will it be responsive to the

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school's needs? What degree of control will the school's administration need to exert over it? Not only should the sources of funding for such programs be carefully defined to avoid intrusion upon scarce educational dollars, but the needs for administrative and other support services and facilities should be analyzed and their costs built into the funding mechanism.

2) Does the proposed community service program not only meet a community need but also offer an opportunity to improve the school program? For example, offering school food service facilities to senior citizen and other nonparent groups might attract talented volunteers for tutoring and other needed educational support services. Child care programs that serve the children in a school setting can motivate their parents to establish or maintain permanent residence in the community, thus building the enrollment base necessary to a quality educational program.

3) Can others, including community agencies and outside specialists, contribute resources and expertise to the proposed community service program, thus relieving the school of some of its financial and administrative burden? Professional management firms offering transportation and food services are equipped to handle the day-to-day details of operating these programs. Preschool and after-school child care programs operated by nonschool agencies may have sources of funding not available to school districts.

4) How will the proposed community service program enhance the image of the school district? How will the specific activity itself be marketed? The marketing factors associated with the area of community service being considered should be examined. Adequate participation in transportation services, food services and child care programs must be assured to pay back the direct and indirect costs of planning and operating these activities. The marketing concepts of product, place, promotion and price become relevant. The school district's responsiveness to the needs of the community to an even greater degree will be required. It is this attitudinal orientation that distinguishes the school system that is committed to community service as a marketing strategy. To be successful, this orientation must exist at all levels of the organization, from board of education to administrative staff to the school employees who deal with the public on a daily basis.

The second section of this chapter examines three community services a school district might offer—transportation services, food services and child care services. How can these services contribute to a school system's marketing plan? What management issues do these activities pose?

Transportation Services

Most school systems decide to enter or not enter into transportation services at the time schools are built or when, during district reorganization, some school buildings are closed. The basic transportation system probably focuses on the needs of students living furthest from school, perhaps with a distance limit below which no transportation is offered, especially to older children. For such districts funding of transportation may be supported by the state to a degree determined by the school district's wealth, with the remaining costs supported by local taxes and possibly student fees.

Schools that incorporate transportation services into a marketing plan begin by conducting a needs assessment of district residents for transportation services. While the results of this assessment will reflect factors such as population density and the distances of residents from the schools they serve, it will also reveal the "people needs" on which the community-oriented school system will focus.

It is likely that the needs assessment will reveal a demand for a greater degree of "close-in" transportation services than has been available. Working parents who are unable to drop off and pick up their children at school may be interested in convenient bus service—and willing to support the cost of a quality program. This interest may extend not only to-and-from school service; demands for late bus service from after-school activities and from school to child care centers for young children may also be identified. Moreover, parental concern over the safety of children is increasing as children leave and return home in their parents' absence and the media report the all-too-frequent tragedies that befall today's children.

A school system that embarks on a program of offering close-in transportation services faces several management issues. Funding for the necessary equipment and operating expenditures for services below the distance limit for state funding must be secured. If the district has access to a transportation levy, its board of education must be shown the benefits to the school system as a whole that would accrue from this service and convinced that it should exercise its taxing authority to support it. Perhaps a referendum to initiate this kind of levy will be required; another chapter in this book deals with strategies for presenting such issues to the public.

It is unlikely that sufficient taxing authority will exist to fund a comprehensive transportation program designed to serve close-in pupils. Schools are therefore faced with pricing decisions that will assure the full funding of transportation services while maintaining an adequate base of participation. Surveys of parents and neighboring districts with such programs can serve to define acceptable price ranges. Schools may also wish to develop guidelines for establishing the proportion of transportation services to be funded by taxes and student fees. A community-oriented transportation program can contribute resources to—or drain them from—the educational program. Assuring an adequate level of funding for direct and indirect costs will prevent competition with educational services over funds.

Once need and funding sources define the parameters of the school system's transportation program, other management issues will need to be resolved. Whether to operate services with school equipment and personnel or to contract for services will be one of the first questions. Here an independent transportation consultant might be helpful for equipment specification route design and other planning issues. The question of "operate versus contract" will revolve around such factors including the availability of funding (or borrowing authority) for equipment and the ability of an outside service to respond to a system's needs. As a general rule schools with an extensive transportation program serving a large proportion of pupils and including many of the "extras" will prefer to operate their own programs. Such programs are usually not attractive to contract services since they work against the firm's allocating its equipment and personnel among several districts.

The community-oriented transportation program is an obvious attraction to young families. A bus fleet can enhance options for educational program en-

richment, field trips and other classroom extensions are facilitated and participation in extracurricular activities is increased by late bus service. Where the law permits, school buses can be made available for the transportation of senior citizens, and outside funding for this service might be available to offset part of the costs of maintaining and operating the bus fleet.

Where an extensive and reliable public transportation service exists, schools might want to explore how the transportation agency can contribute to improved school transportation services. Subsidizing the cost of transporting students on public conveyances might turn out to be less costly than establishing or expanding school-operated services, especially for high school students.

As with any school activity, transportation services will contribute to the school district's image. A community-oriented transportation program can be expected to increase expectations and demands for expansion of services. As the school bus becomes a larger part of the child's environment, parental concern for the safety of children on the bus will equal that in the school. The use of seat belts on school buses is being investigated in several communities. Demands for bus service to after-school child care centers and community activities can also be expected.

As with any other product being marketed, it will be necessary for the school district to modify transportation services to respond to the needs of the consumers while keeping in mind the need for all support services to contribute tothe central educational mission of the schools.

Food Services

As with transportation services, the decision to offer school lunch programs requiring construction of kitchens in school buildings was probably made at the time the schools were built. At that time it is likely that, in urban and suburban areas, elementary schools were located within walking distance of students' homes. Children went home for lunch, and the school offered a "brown-bag" or milk-only lunch program at most. Systems with several small junior high schools may have operated in a similar manner, and only the high schools were equipped for preparing full school lunches.

Schools with existing lunch programs often find them hard to sustain. Those schools operating full hot lunch programs during their period of peak enrollment are now experiencing problems resulting from the under-utilization of the labor-intensive kitchens designed to serve several hundred meals a day. In addition changes in children's food tastes (for better or worse), decreased government subsidies of school lunch programs and general cost increases have placed boards of education in the position of choosing between eliminating or scaling back lunch services or subsidizing them at an increasing rate from scarce educational funds.

Meanwhile the closing of many elementary and junior high school buildings and the consolidation of school districts have made it difficult if not impossible for children to go home for lunch. Furthermore, working parents are not home to meet or feed them. The result is that school lunch services are increasingly attractive to the modern family. Schools have responded by designing programs ranging from supervision of "brown-bag" programs (sometimes at parents'

expense) to instituting lunch programs not requiring the extensive capital expenditures involved in constructing full kitchens.

The attraction of some form of lunch service as a marketing "plus" is obvious. The choices that face school systems as they assess the need for and choose how to offer this service follow much the same lines as outlined above for transportation services.

Few districts can afford extensive subsidy of food service programs lest the educational program be compromised. Therefore pricing decisions must respond not only to budgetary needs for staff, food, supplies, equipment, administration and staff benefits, but they must also take into account parents' perceptions of the value of the service. Parents will resist programs priced much above the amount it costs them to provide a "brown-bag" lunch. At the same time additional children staying at school during the lunch hour will increase costs for supervision. Careful decisions as to product, price and promotional strategies to increase participation are essential in planning to initiate, or modify, a school lunch program.

The community- and market-oriented school lunch program will consider options available for reducing unit costs by expanding services beyond the traditional lunch program. High schools in which students arrive early for classes or activities have offered breakfast programs; these programs are less common at elementary and junior high schools, but they ought to be considered where community needs suggest, for costs for staff and equipment are spread over more services. Expansion of lunch services to include child care programs and senior citizens (bringing them into the schools where they might help with the educational program) are other means of increasing the utilization of school food services. Larger kitchens can be used for community affairs, providing additional revenue to the school.

Many school districts are looking to outside management assistance in planning for, modifying and operating their food service programs. Outside services range from purveyors of "heat-and-serve" lunches to schools without full kitchens to comprehensive food service management companies that handle planning, purchasing, employment and operation of the entire program. Another chapter in this book deals with issues in selecting a food service management company. A community-oriented school district might find these services available locally, perhaps as an extension of a business' cafeteria or even a nearby restaurant. The extent of the program to be offered will suggest the form of management required. The decision to operate or contract lunch program management will, as for transportation services, relate to issues of quality and control.

Child Care

The demand by parents for quality child care services has been well documented. The two-career or single parent family is attracted to a community where child care services are reliable, convenient and reasonably priced. Families shopping for homes and schools regard the existence of these services as a major factor in their decision making.

Some schools operate child care programs themselves, and the marketing potential of a school-operated program is obvious. It combines the reputation of the system with available "rent-free" facilities and the convenience of "one-

stop" drop off and pickup. Other school districts have chosen to rent school facilities—often school buildings that have been closed—to outside child care operators.

Schools offering child care services have found the major market to be parents of children of kindergarten through primary grade age. A few schools have offered preschool programs to 3- and 4-year-olds that extend up to all-day care. A needs assessment will assist the school system in defining its niche in the child care market. Parent organizations may be helpful in conducting the assessment; objections from private operators can be turned aside if parents identify the voids that the school can fill. In addition state and county child advocacy agencies, which license private facilities, can assist the school in identifying child care services voids in their communities and in validating the need for school-operated programs.

Once needs have been assessed and a program format developed, the school district will find that a child care program requires a number of administrative services that, depending on the decision of the board of education, will have to be factored into program costs or otherwise funded. Immediate supervision of the program might be vested in an on-site teacher-director. Registration, fee billing and other business services will be required. Food services are necessary, and perhaps they can be a source of revenue for the program. Transportation may be needed, either from home to the center or from a child's school to the center at the close of the school day. Extensive planning is required for these functions, as well as consideration of the impact of each function on the total school operation.

Funding for child care programs operated by schools comes primarily, if not exclusively, from parent fees. The price is determined by staff salaries and benefits along with the costs of food, supplies and equipment. Fees for school-operated programs must compare favorably with those charged by private services. While school staff costs tend to be higher than those of private operations, the school need not pay rent for facilities or account for a profit. Some state and federal subsidies might be available, but they may be earmarked for low income families only. Depending on the community, these subsidies should be examined as an alternative means of funding child care services.

Educators who may bemoan the rapid disappearance of the traditional mother nurturing the preschool or elementary school child during nonschool hours are finding benefits in the housing of child care, including preschool programs, in the elementary schools. Children's adjustment to school is said to be easier, and specialized facilities and personnel can be drawn on to enrich the school program.

In addition child care services offer many opportunities for cooperation between schools and other community agencies. Park and recreation departments may sponsor activities for the school program. Or the school district may contract child care services to a local business whose employees live in the district. In both cases the school gains the benefit of services and revenue from outside sources.

Conclusion

Community service programs like transportation services, food services and child care services can be important elements in a school district's marketing

plan. All three are attractions to modern young parents who are, says the *Wall Street Journal* (August 29, 1984), "able to research and quantify their expectations in ways never before possible. These parents are choosy about everything that will touch their children's lives," the *Journal* continues, "and they're willing to invest in quality."

The contribution the school can make to child rearing is highlighted by one of the parents interviewed for the article: "I'd love to raise my kids the way I grew up in the 1950s—in a neighborhood with children of mixed ages, playing in relative safety and freedom. But I have to approach child rearing differently because there aren't any kids in our neighborhood during the day. They're all in programs, and if I want my kids to meet other kids, they have to be in programs, too."

Schools exist, of course, for education in the traditional sense. How they reconcile the emerging demands that they enter other aspects of the "kid business" without diverting resources from their educational mission will measure the abilities of their managers to sort out priorities and manage ever more complex organizations. Those that are successful should be rewarded by vibrant organizations full of the excitement that accompanies program development and the rewards that accompany meeting human needs.

12

Preparing to Market School Food Services

John J. Lane
and
George Koenig

ALTHOUGH school lunch programs are a bargain nutritionally and economically (Polk, 1983), for many school districts the school lunch program is more bain than boon. Fewer reimbursment dollars, declining enrollments, student demands for open lunch programs in the high schools, parent demands for better nutrition and more attractive food presentation as well as competition from fast-food chains drive school business managers to discover ways both to penetrate the food service market and to make the food service operation pay its own way. As a consequence, a number of school districts are looking for alternative solutions to their food service programs.

One option getting close scrutiny is contracting out the school's food services to a food service management company. This brief chapter provides guidelines for school business managers to consider in making that decision and in selecting a company.

The first step toward marketing school food services is to evaluate the existing food services program.

In cooperation with the Philadelphia Board of Education, SAGA Corporation developed a checklist that can serve as a useful needs assessment instrument for school board members.

If administrators must say no to more than 50 percent of the questions, it may be time for a change. (See next page.)

Planning

Following the needs assessment and a decision to contract the school district's food services, school business managers must take several planning steps. Most of the steps revolve around knowing what the school district wants before inviting proposals from food service management companies.

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Local Food Service Assessment

	YES	NO
1) Are your students now getting decent lunches in terms of quality, variety, nutrition and sanitary conditions?	_____	_____
2) Does money come out of your operating budget to "subsidize" your food service program? If "yes," how much? $_____	_____	_____
3) Are you making use of free government commodities, and are you aware of the variety and quantities available?	_____	_____
4) Do the students react favorably to your lunch program?	_____	_____
5) Do parents?	_____	_____
6) Do faculty members?	_____	_____
7) Have you ever sampled your school lunches?	_____	_____
Would you eat them yourself?	_____	_____
Would you feed them to your children?	_____	_____
8) Are cash receipts handled in a businesslike manner?	_____	_____
9) Have you reviewed your purchasing procedures?	_____	_____
10) Are you aware of the relationship between input and output on a total or individual school basis?	_____	_____
11) Are you, as a board member, supplied with reports concerning the food service program?	_____	_____
12) Are these reports adequate as to what is going on?	_____	_____
Is more information needed?	_____	_____
13) Do your principals and teachers feel that they don't reduce the time they spend on the educational program to deal with lunch problems?	_____	_____
14) Do you have backup plans for nondelivery of lunches if not prepared on site?	_____	_____
15) Are provisions made for training and upgrading your food management and support staff?	_____	_____
16) Would your organization be considered efficient from a business point of view?	_____	_____
17) Are strict regulations adhered to for individual control?	_____	_____
18) Are you satisfied, when looking at the amount of uneaten food in your trash cans, that you are controlling food waste as well as you could?	_____	_____
19) Would you consider your facility sanitary?	_____	_____
20) Are you satisfied that you're minimizing food waste due to spoilage from nonrotation of stock or oversupply?	_____	_____
21) Are provisions made to ensure that you are getting what you're paying for from vendors?	_____	_____
22) Is your faculty lunchroom separate and operating at a loss?	_____	_____

23) Is it considered a fringe benefit? _____ _____
Source: Philadelphia Board of Education, SAGA Corporation

1. Decide on the food service program's objectives. They might include ensuring quality food and service, ensuring efficiency and reducing school managerial time spent on food service matters.
2. Decide whether to contract all or part of the school district's food service operation and establish a time period for proper implementation and evaluation.
3. Gather the necessary data for potential contractors. Most food service management companies will provide school districts with a list of their information needs prior to the district's request for a proposal.
4. Establish guidelines for proposals and criteria for selecting the food service management company. Criteria should include:

- willingness to work with the school district
- ability to improve the ambience, efficiency and productivity of the food service operation
- willingness and ability to survey students for feedback
- sophistication of financial systems technology
- approval process for pricing
- record of adherence to local, state and federal law; and
- record relative to housekeeping, sanitation and cleanliness.

5. Invite and evaluate proposals.

Forging a Partnership

In evaluating proposals from food service management companies, look for those that offer ways of forging a partnership. The National Committee for Child Nutrition, an organization of food service management companies, has developed a document that, in effect, provides general guidelines for administrators looking at what management companies can offer. The underlying theme is "partnership." The hallmark of an effective food service program is partnership with students, teachers and school officials, community members and parents.

Students—Does the food service company involve students in the planning process? Is there a student advisory council? Does the company have the philosophy that students are *customers?* To what extent does food service contribute to students' nutrition educational progress? Does the company supply booklets, filmstrips, posters and the like that draw attention to the necessity of good nutrition?

Teachers and School Officials—Does the food service company save administrative time? Is the company willing to work with home economics and health education teachers? Can the company demonstrate that it can hold costs down? Can the company demonstrate that it promotes food services to increase participation?

Community Members—Does the food service company hire employees locally? Does the company purchase much of its food locally? Do the company employees participate actively in community life?

Parents—Can the company demonstrate to parents that it is providing a balanced diet for students? Does the company contribute to parent awareness of children's nutritional needs?

A food service management company willing to become a partner may be an effective way for a school district to market its food services.

References and Resources

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13

School and Community Facility Use Agreements

Calvin W. Lathen
and
Jess D. Caudillo

SCHOOL FACILITIES in the future must be recognized as multiagency usage sites. The present economic climate and recent tax restrictive initiatives have caused citizens in many communities to become advocates encouraging and often demanding cooperative use of school facilities by nonschool community-based agencies in order to save money.

The nonschool agencies most often encouraged to use school facilities have been the municipal park and recreation department, for the same taxpayers finance both agencies. Most park and recreation administrators accept this situation and recognize their inability to provide a well-balanced, comprehensive program without the cooperation of the local school district.

Other outside users of school facilities include community-based agencies such as the YMCA or YWCA, boys and girls clubs and local church groups. For the most part these agencies are respected by school administrators as responsible organizations, and they are permitted, and in some cases encouraged, to use school facilities.

The Benefits

Generally, school officials recognize that shared usage of school facilities is a wise use of available community resources and saves money for taxpayers. This understanding was affirmed in 1976 by the National Joint Continuing Education Steering Committee, which represents the National Community Education Association, the American Association for Leisure and Recreation and the National Recreation and Park Association:

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We recognize the urgency of jointly developing, improving and expanding effective interagency cooperation and working relationships if common goals are to be attained, and it is further recognized that if the total community is to be served in the most efficient manner, these interagency efforts must be successful.

The local school is the key agency in an agreement for shared use of facilities because it represents the greatest investment of taxpayer's dollars in terms of community facilities, professional personnel and overall operation costs. School facilities are usually strategically located to serve people at the neighborhood- and communitywide levels. Therefore park and recreation departments and other agencies that use school facilities must take the lead in establishing cooperative working relationships with the schools to provide community services that efficiently and economically use community resources. Utilization of school resources is essential for park and recreation agencies if they expect to meet public needs and demands now and in the future.

When the school and recreation department have a cooperative usage agreement, the school can also benefit from access to city facilities that are not available at the school site. One of the common facilities often used by the school is the community-owned and operated swimming pool. City-owned baseball facilities are also commonly used by schools, and in larger metropolitan areas, where major sports arenas, coliseums and stadiums are constructed and maintained by the municipality, the school can benefit greatly from shared usage agreements. Primarily, however, it is the financial benefits achieved from cooperative and efficient use of existing facilities that are most important both to administrators and to the public.

The Problems

Many cooperative efforts for the shared use of facilities have not succeeded because of clashes between school and city administrators, park and recreation directors and personnel from other community agencies. School officials often recognize that shared use of school facilities by outside agencies presents many problems. Principals, activities directors and school custodians can testify to a host of difficulties that range from scheduling complications to vandalism and increased maintenance requirements. In many cases problems are magnified by informal verbal or poorly conceived agreement policies between the school and the user agency. Such agreements are often inconsistent and fail to address critical issues. While it is true that some agencies that conduct their relationship with the school on a purely informal, verbal basis have developed an effective cooperative relationship, this is the exception and not the rule.

Poor communication leads to a misunderstanding and distrust and has been a major problem and obstacle in developing the proper climate for cooperative support. In addition other problems include:

- overprotection of properties by facility managers or administrators
- disagreement about fees and charges levied
- fears and conflicts with respect to liability
- disputes over maintenance

- conflicts in scheduling and sponsorship of activities
- competition in establishing priorities for usage
- disagreement over which activities are appropriate
- resentment of time demands by school administrators.

These problems can only be solved if top management and policy-making officials from the agencies involved acknowledge the needs and advantages of cooperative, coordinated efforts and are committed to these efforts in the public interest. To achieve this goal, many school systems have adopted formal interagency facility usage agreements.

Issues in Interagency Agreements

Written interagency agreements that address a standard set of issues may spark creative thought, producing a piggybacking of agreement ideas and additional concerns that address local or specific situations. In addition, they ensure consistency and reduce the amount of time administrators will have to spend responding to requests for the use of school facilities. They guarantee that common or important areas of concern will not be overlooked. Written contracts are less subject to the vicissitudes of local policy-making boards and commissions than are verbal agreements. They smooth out friction between school personnel and employees from the outside agency, especially over the scheduling and clean-up of facilities. The biggest advantage of a written agreement, however, is that it protects both parties.

Written interagency agreements provide another distinct advantage. Schools have always used procedures that discourage the use of their facilities by "marginal" groups or for activities that may not be acceptable to the commuity at large. These tactics often take the form of establishing prohibitive rental costs, scheduling conflicts and time-delaying measures. More effective, however, is a written interagency agreement contract designed for long-term cooperative usage that establishes priorities favorable to acceptable and responsible community agencies.

The major component in developing an interagency agreement for shared facilities usage is to determine which issues or agreement statements should be included in the contract. Even with the increasing volume of usage requests placed on the schools, little research has been conducted to determine which issues are of most concern to those parties that might develop and administer interagency agreements. To address this problem, School superintendents and municipal recreation directors in 323 randomly selected cities of various sizes across the United States were surveyed. The survey questionnaire listed 43 issues that might appear in an interagency agreement. The administrators rated the desirability of each issue on a four-point scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree."

The 14 issues that received significant mean ratings were retained as the most important items to be included in a usage agreement. They represent the contractual concerns that school and recreation department administrators thought should be included in an interagency agreement between the school and a municipal recreation department. The 14 critical issues identified in the study, with clarifying comments, are presented in order of importance.

1) *The agreement should include a schedule of specific dates and times for facility usage for the school and the recreation department.*—A clear understanding of a specific schedule was the leading concern of administrators. Nothing disturbs the school or outside agency more than a scheduling conflict between potential users.

2) *The agreement should state the supervisory duties and responsibilities of the school and recreation department personnel.*—Issues related to which areas within the facility need supervision and responsibility for the supervision must be clarified. A specific list of supervisory duties should be developed and included in the agreement. Common duties often include regular inspection of halls, rest rooms and other spaces not used as the primary activity site.

3) *The agreement should outline the procedures a school or community group must follow to obtain authorization to use a facility.*—To ensure consistency in authorizing and scheduling the shared usage of facilities, an established procedure must be developed and a contact person identified. The school should appoint one person to monitor this system. Problems always occur when several people, such as the vice-principal, school activities director or school secretary, schedule the outside use of school facilities.

4) *The agreement should specify the school and recreation officials responsible for the operational execution of the interagency agreement.*—The school and recreation department employees responsible for implementing and carrying out the terms of the agreement should be specified by either title or name. When these officials are identified, communication is enhanced and other administrative personnel are released from the burden of dealing with the operational concerns that may develop.

5) *The agreement should specify the maintenance duties required during and after facility usage and the employee responsible for performing them.*—Tasks such as cleaning and sweeping need to be delineated. The agreement should also specify the disposition of furniture items such as bleachers, tables and chairs. A major consideration is specifying responsibility for locking and securing the facility.

6) *The agreement should outline the approval necessary before the user agency may install any permanent or semipermanent equipment on school property.*—Examples of permanent or semipermanent equipment include lighting fixtures, fences, sprinkler systems, climbing ropes, playground equipment and ball diamonds.

7) *The agreement should specify who is responsible for expenses that occur for programs taking place on school facilities.*—If the school and recreation department cosponsor programs or special events, financial arrangements must be well developed and understood by both parties. When an outside agency uses school facilities, a common arrangement is for the user to reimburse the school for school employees required at the facility. The agreement should also clarify which agency is responsible for damage, vandalism and other unexpected expenses that might occur.

8) *The agreement should delineate the authority of the recreation department or its agents (director, commission, etc.) in recommending rules, regulations or other specifications that pertain to use of school facilities.*—The school will not want to be placed in a situation in which a user agency develops and enforces rules, regulations or specifications that are unacceptable to or in violation of

school board policy. An example would be a procedure or program that discriminates against a particular class or segment of the population.

9) *The agreement should delineate the authority of other individuals employed by the cooperating agencies who may not be indicated on the interagency agreement.*—Employees who have a vested interest in the facility or its use may make demands upon employees of the cooperating agency. In the case of the school, these people might be athletic coaches or custodians; in the case of the recreation department, they might be the on-site facility or program supervisor. Delineating this authority is critical for preventing, a dominating and seemingly authoritative person from disrupting programs authorized under the joint usage agreement.

10) *The agreement should identify which employees have supervisory responsibility while school facilities are used for recreation purposes.*—The question here is whether the school or the recreation department has the ultimate authority while the school facility is used by the recreation department. The agreement should specify the person (by title or name) who has ultimate supervisory authority.

11) *The agreement should outline how differences that might arise will be arbitrated and identify who will represent each agency in arbitration.*—Problems not addressed by the interagency agreement must be arbitrated by specified representatives of the school and the recreation department.

12) *The agreement should state the legal liability and responsibility of each party involved in the agreement. Required or suggested insurance coverage should also be outlined.*—There must be a clear understanding of which agency is legally responsible for all aspects of the program, including supervision, and which is legally responsible for all issues of liability concerning the facility. In most cases the school will specify that the outside agency has legal responsibility for all aspects of program management. Therefore the school will, in most cases, retain legal responsibility for the permanent facilities. Even if an agreement specifies that the outside agency is legally responsible for the facility, the school cannot legally maintain a faulty facility. Extreme caution should be exercised and legal counsel should be obtained by the school on this interagency issue.

13) *The agreement should specify the school equipment that the recreation department may use.*—Normally expendable equipment items such as balls, bats, rackets, scorebooks and whistles should be provided by the outside agency. The use of more permanent items like gymnastic equipment, weight machines and the public address system will need to be specified in the agreement.

14) *The agreement should provide for reasonable access to the facility for the purpose of performing maintenance and custodial duties.*—Maintenance and custodial duties are necessary for the safe upkeep of a school facility. There is usually little difficulty over these matters with regularly scheduled short-duration (2–4 hour) use by outside agency. Long-duration use can present substantial maintenance and custodial conflict and must be addressed in the agreement.

The interagency agreement issues used in the study were also evaluated according to the size of the communities involved. Equal numbers of questionnaires were sent to communities with populations of under 15,000, 15,000–50,000 and over 50,000. The results were surprising, since one would assume that smaller communities would have fewer and different interagency

agreement concerns than larger communities. The study revealed no significant differences in the responses of administrators from the communities of various population sizes.

Since the municipal park and recreation departments are the major users of school facilities, problems often develop over the amount of time allotted for community recreation use. School district coaches, custodians and others directly affected by outsider use of school facilities may become possessive or protective of their facilities. Involving these school personnel in the development of the interagency agreement contract can reduce their concern, promote positive feelings and reduce conflicts.

When there are difficulties between the schools and the community agencies using school facilities, it may be time to reevaluate and expand the interagency agreement. The research findings suggest that the interagency agreement issues presented in this chapter will promote the cooperative usage process. With efficient interagency contracts, both participants and taxpayers generally will benefit from cooperative shared facility agreements between schools and community agencies.

Sample Interagency Agreement

The contractual agreement that follows is a model developed from several existing interagency agreements. It includes all 14 of the items that school superintendents and municipal recreation directors indicated as essential to a successful interagency agreement.

This agreement, effective _____, is between the Board of Education of the _____ School District and the City of _____.

WHEREAS the Board, on behalf of the School District, desires to contract with the City for the use and service of certain agencies, employees and facilities of the City, and

WHEREAS the City desires to contract with the Board for the use and services of certain agencies, employees and facilities of the School District, and

WHEREAS the City and the Board desire to furnish such use and services, and have the power to do so, and

WHEREAS it is in the best interest of the City and the School District to work together in the development of the joint usage of School District and City Parks and Recreation facilities, and

WHEREAS this joint usage of facilities provides taxpayers a better utilization of school buildings, athletic facilities, parks and recreation areas, and avoids a duplication of these facilities, thereby saving tax monies, and

WHEREAS it is the desire of the Board and the City that the cost of such use and services to the taxpayers of the School District and the City be without financial profit to either the School District or the City, and that such cost be consistent with the efficient administration of the affairs of the School District and the City, and

WHEREAS funds for the cost of such uses, facilities and services have been included in the respective budgets,

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the above premises, the School District and the City agree to cooperate with each other as follows:

1) This agreement shall terminate on _____, unless terminated earlier by mutual agreement of the Board and the City.

2) A schedule of facilities, dates and times for the use of school and city facilities will be worked out in advance at a meeting between the City Recreation Director and the School Coordinator of Athletics and Physical Education, to be held on the first Wednesday of each quarter for the following quarter. This schedule will be arranged to avoid conflict between school and municipal use and to protect the real and personal property involved. In scheduling the use of the Board's school facilities, school events shall have first priority, municipal recreation programs shall have second priority and events sponsored by other groups or agencies shall have third priority. In scheduling the use of recreation facilities belonging to the City, the city recreation activities shall have first priority, school events and programs shall have second priority and events sponsored by other groups or agencies shall have third priority.

3) The City shall provide an adequate number of competent personnel to supervise the recreation activities taking place after school hours and during holiday and vacation periods at the selected school facilities. The Board shall do likewise when using the City's facilities for school use.

4) The Board or its representatives shall have the right to enter all school areas and facilities made available to the City for community recreation activities under this contract for the purpose of examining, inspecting and determining whether the City has complied with obligations enumerated in this contract. The obligations may concern the care and maintenance of the premises or the repair or improvements on the premises when necessary. The City shall have the same rights when the Board uses City facilities.

5) The City may install sprinkler systems, turf, lighting, fencing and equipment that is not in conflict with school use in areas selected by the City Recreation Director. The Board will submit to the City prior written approval of the location and the plans and specifications for the placement of all such equipment, facilities and permanent improvements upon school premises and will designate in advance the type, design and construction of such facilities. Any installation of equipment or construction on school premises for community recreation purposes shall be at City cost, or proportionally shared by the City and the Board, as the respective annual budget appropriations of these bodies permit. The cost of maintaining these improved areas and facilities shall be borne proportionally by the City and Board as determined by the relative use of the facilities. Each party agrees to maintain such areas and facilities in good condition during the periods of their respective responsibilities.

6) It is agreed that all City-owned property, as well as other improvements erected in or upon any school premises (even though it may be attached to the realty), may be removed by the City at any time, provided the City does not then default on its performance obligations. The City also shall see that any such removal of property be effected before the expiration of the term of this agreement and that all damage caused to premises by removal shall be repaired by the City. It is further agreed that the Board shall have the same rights and obligations when City facilities are involved.

7) When permanent facilities are erected on any school premises under Paragraphs 5 and 6, a separate contract shall be entered into between the Board and the City regarding use and payment, which shall be an addendum to this contract.

8) It is mutually agreed that the cost for the contract period has been taken into account in arriving at the agreed-upon exchange for uses, facilities and services provided. The City shall be responsible for the payments for services of all personnel employed by the Recreation Department in connection with its use of such school properties.

9) Each party shall keep the premises and facilities belonging to the other party in neat order; shall promptly remove all trash, refuse, garbage and debris of any kind from the premises during the term of this agreement; shall provide sufficient number of receptacles in the area for trash disposal; and shall post signs designed to prohibit littering. In addition, each party shall systematically and periodically clean the floors and rest room facilities of any premises made available to it under this agreement.

10) It is understood and agreed that the personnel employed by the City in its recreation program shall be under the supervision of the City Recreation Director and that school principals shall be consulted in the planning and administering of a recreation program to be conducted by the City in facilities that normally are under the principals' jurisdiction.

11) It is agreed that any dispute or difference involving facilities that arises between the Board and the City shall be arbitrated and settled by the City Recreation Director and Superintendent of Schools, with the understanding that the City has responsibility for City facilities and that the Superintendent of Schools has the responsibility for all school district property and facilities.

12) Any personnel dispute or disagreement shall be arbitrated and settled by the City Recreation Director and Superintendent of Schools.

13) Each party will at all times protect and indemnify the other party against any and all loss, cost, damage or expense arising from any accident or other occurrence to person or property on or about premises belonging to the other party occurring while it has control of the premises.

14) The City will furnish and supply all expendable materials necessary to carry on a community recreation program for all ages on any premises belonging to the Board but under the supervision of the City. The Board shall do likewise when using any premises belonging to the City but under the supervision of the Board.

15) Neither party shall sell or assign its rights under this agreement.

16) This agreement shall be binding upon the parties signing and their respective successors.

Resources

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14

Joint Occupancy of Public School Facilities

Robert Posilkin

JOINT OCCUPANCY of public school buildings by nonschool programs offers local boards of education the opportunity to generate revenue and, as an added bonus, provide the program benefits of the tenants. It allows for the leasing of surplus school space (under the auspices of the board of education) on a full-time basis to nonpublic school users. This is a step beyond the traditional use of school space on an after-hours basis, as space is leased throughout the school day. Joint occupancy attracts a host of new uses for the public schools, for it permits both a long-term stay and regular daytime operation.

Why has joint occupancy developed? As school systems throughout the country experience declining enrollments, on a long-term or short-term basis, surplus space continues to be a cost burden. Heating, cleaning, lighting, maintenance and even outstanding debt continue to be costly budget items even without daily instructional use. A joint occupancy program allows school systems to put these facilities to alternative outside uses and recover at least part, if not all, of these costs.

In 1978 the Montgomery County, Maryland, Board of Education adopted its joint occupancy policy. Shortly thereafter it authorized the position of coordinator of joint occupancy for implementation. This action followed the several months of work by a staff-citizen committee that studied the county's declining enrollment, the resulting surplus space in the schools, the loss of scarce financial resources to pay for the continued operation of this space and the feasibility of initiating a joint tenancy program.

The joint occupancy policy (reprinted in full at the end of this chapter) clarifies the board's position and outlines this new approach to school facilities management:

1) purpose of the policy: that the Montgomery County Board of Education permit joint occupancy of its facilities with eligible users to offset to the extent feasible and practical the cost of maintaining surplus classroom space

2) educational purpose: that the superintendent actively seek joint occupants who will complement, support and benefit the educational program for Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) students

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3) definition: that joint occupancy be defined as leased surplus space required by the user to be allocated exclusively for his use as distinguished from space that is shared for part of a day with MCPS when not needed by the MCPS educational program

4) priority order for use of available space: to encourage certain types of uses, the board established the order of priority for selection of users:

- educational purposes (public supported or private nonprofit) that will benefit the children enrolled in the regular school programs and enhance the learning experiences for children (e.g., day care centers)
- community programs (public supported or private nonprofit) that will enhance the learning experiences of children or provide needed community services (e.g., counseling centers)
- housing for other county agency functions (e.g., offices for recreation department staff)
- private enterprise.

The policy not only specifies the priority of uses but also the expenses for which each user pays. Since the board indicated a preference for nonprofit child-centered programs, these programs pay in the fewest cost categories, while private enterprise users pay in the most cost categories. The expenses paid by users are as follows:

The lease agreement describes the responsibilities of the board of education and the joint tenant during the lease term in the public schools. Many of the lease components are fairly standard "boilerplate" language, offering protection of the school facility and minimizing the liability of the board while guaranteeing the tenant the uninterrupted use of the school. The critical underlying premise of the lease, however, is that the tenant may not engage in any activity that violates the integrity of the public school program. This requirement was stipulated by the state attorney general upon his review of the joint occupancy policy prior to its adoption. Therefore, joint tenant must be able to operate within the daily operation of a school's program, compatible with its daily educational activities.

When surplus space is leased to nonschool programs, the agreement must ensure the least possible interference with regular ongoing educational programs and that there will be no infringement on the space required for them. Therefore, to implement joint tenancy effectively, school planners and administrators must define the space requirements given a particular school's program and the amount of space necessary to house it. At first it might appear that declining enrollment would eliminate this consideration. But declining enrollments have often permitted expansion of programs such as math and science labs, reading rooms and parent volunteer rooms. Therefore a reduction in enrollment may not, in actuality, result in surplus space. Consequently school systems need to define space requirements in light of program needs and then determine the surplus space, if any. Thus the possibility of joint occupancy also provides school systems with the opportunity to examine their facilities and review the development of space standards for accommodating the services they provide for students.

What specific types of users have leased surplus space in Montgomery County Public Schools facilities? Since 1978 we have had a wide range of users that include day care programs, county offices, artists, private schools for the handicapped and offices for nonprofit organizations. Presently we lease space in

approximately 50 school facilities under the jurisdiction of the board of education. The overwhelming number of these tenants are day care services for both school-age and preschool children. Our joint occupancy revenues for FY 1985 are projected at $385,000. Since the program's inception in 1978, almost $2 million in total revenues has been generated.

The MCPS policy on the joint occupancy of school facilities and the administrative regulation for joint occupancy follow.

Policy
Joint Occupancy of Montgomery County Public Schools Facilities

RESOLVED, That the Board of Education permit joint occupancy of its facilities with eligible users to offset to the extent feasible and practical the cost of maintaining surplus classroom space; and be it further

RESOLVED, That joint occupancy shall be defined as leased space required by the user to be allocated exclusively to his use as distinguished from space which is shared for part of a day with MCPS when not needed for MCPS educational programs; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the superintendent actively seek joint occupants who will complement, support and benefit the educational program for MCPS students under the policy delineated below:

Criteria for Identification of Available Space:

1) The space is projected to be surplus for at least two years.

2) The space is located in a portion or section of the building which can be easily isolated from the educational program, preferably near a separate entrance.

3) The projected student enrollment at the school is less than the low-range building capacity. This criterion may be waived if enrollment exceeds the low-range capacity.

Priority Order for Use of Available Space:

Priorities for selection of users to occupy available spaces in MCPS facilities will be determined by the superintendent of schools, after his evaluation of information and reactions of community residents. The selection of users should be based upon the order indicated below to best meet the needs of children and to ensure prudent utilization of resources:

1) MCPS school based/school related programs (e.g., special education classes, enrichment classes).

2) Educational programs (public-supported or private nonprofit) which will benefit the children specially enrolled in the regular school programs and enhance the learning experiences for children (e.g., day care centers, preschool programs, foreign language schools, data processing schools or public college programs).

3) Housing for school system staff or functions (e.g., office space for staff of a federally funded project, location of an area resource room).

4) Community programs (public-supported or private nonprofit) which will enhance learning experiences for children or provide needed community services (e.g., elderly care centers, senior citizen centers, counseling centers, nutrition centers).

5) Housing for other county agency function (e.g., offices for human resource projects, county health services, recreation department staff).

6) Private enterprise:

a) Nonpublic schools and/or nurseries (e.g., religious day schools) which will not attract additional students from the regular school program. No MCPS operating school will be permitted to house parallel school grades in joint occupancy spaces.

b) Private offices (e.g., real estate, lawyer, consultant).

c) Private medical practice/community services (e.g., doctor, artist, beauty salon, automation service).

d) Other private/political groups or organizations.

In those cases where two or more candidates for the same space within the same priority category are equally desired, the space will be provided to the candidate providing the most beneficial offer.

Cost to User Group:

Each non-MCPS user of available space shall be expected to reimburse MCPS on a prorated basis for applicable costs related to this use which may include normal building upkeep, building services staff, utility expenditures, restroom supplies, insurance, administrative costs and other such items on a square foot basis to be identified by the superintendent of schools or his designee and contained in the lease negotiated with each user group. For each non-MCPS user group, the lease cost shall be negotiated and be reflective of MCPS costs, comparable market prices and the profit/nonprofit status of the proposed tenant. Lease fees may be negotiated with groups which in some cases do not recover all MCPS costs for the space to be leased. The income received from this program will be received as general revenue recorded in a separate account and used to offset the cost of making available the space leased and cost of operating the joint occupancy program, in accordance with Internal Revenue Service regulations.

Save Harmless Provision:

The lease for each user group shall include appropriate language to save the Board of Education and the school system harmless against any and all claims, demands, suits or other forms of liability that may arise out of this use of school space. Each proposed tenant must comply with all appropriate legal and zoning requirements; and be it further:

RESOLVED, That it is the responsibility of the Interagency Coordinating Board as established in Bill 43-78, to locate users of shared space; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Resolutions 269-75 and 408-75, adopted on April 8 and May 27, 1975, respectively, be rescinded; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the superintendent be authorized to negotiate fees for the use of surplus school space on a basis of the Board of Education cost guidelines; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the superintendent submit to the Board quarterly reports on the use of surplus space; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the County Council and County Executive and that the superintendent effect widespread dissemination of its provisions.

Resolution No. 122-78, February 14, 1978, amended by Resolution No. 509-78, July 11, 1978, amended by Resolution No. 1056-79, December 17, 1979.

Administrative Regulation
Joint Occupancy of MCPS Facilities

I) PURPOSE

To publish the procedures concerning the leasing of surplus school space by nonpublic school users and to establish guidelines for implementation of the policy statement (ECM)

II) GUIDELINES

A) Identification of Schools to House Joint Occupants:

1) Each spring, the school facilities planners will compare each school's projected enrollment to its low-range capacity and identify those schools whose projected enrollment is below its low-range capacity. Schools with utilization above the low-range capacity may be considered for joint occupancy subject to the needs of the instructional program.

2) The area associate superintendent, coordinator of joint occupancy, and affected school principal will be notified, prior to June 1, if a school enrollment has been projected to be less than the low-range building capacity for at least the next two years.

3) Each affected school principal, area associate superintendent, and coordinator of joint occupancy will meet to discuss the feasibility of jointly sharing the underutilized facility and to recognize all applicable zoning restrictions covering noneducational uses of spaces.

4) Community residents and other appropriate persons or agencies should be notified in an effort to obtain reactions. County government and college officials are to be alerted that the school is being considered for joint occupancy.

5) The principal and community may, if desired, present their case to the area associate superintendent indicating that joint occupancy at that school should or should not be implemented. The area associate superintendent will decide if joint occupancy is to be implemented at a school.

6) The principals at those schools selected for joint occupancy will identify the spaces available for joint occupancy, preferably near an outside exit.

7) The coordinator of joint occupancy may advertise available facilities.

B) Application for Use of Space:

1) Groups interested in sharing space in a Montgomery County Public School will provide the coordinator of joint occupancy space with a joint occupancy application obtained from his/her office.

2) The coordinator of joint occupancy will notify the applicant of spaces available, general conditions of leasing space, and the next steps or decision points.

3) The coordinator of joint occupancy will ensure, as appropriate, that each group being considered for joint occupancy provides copies of license approvals from supervisory agencies and is fully capable of meeting lease requirements.

C) Priorities for Utilization of Space:

Consideration of priorities for selection of programs to utilize vacant classroom space is to be determined countywide by the coordinator of joint occupancy. This shall be done annually for each ongoing user group. Prime consideration should be given to using school space so as to benefit the learning experiences of children.

D) Identification and Selection of Joint Occupants:

1) The coordinator of joint occupancy will maintain a file of applicants.

2) Central, area and school-based administrators may identify and forward to the coordinator of joint occupancy the types of desirable joint occupants which would complement or enrich the educational program.

3) Upon identification of a school for occupancy, the coordinator of joint occupancy will meet with the principal, PTA, civic associations and other appropriate community representatives to identify desirable and acceptable types of tenants. Community input should be sought from a broad community representation.

4) The coordinator of joint occupancy may advertise and engage the services of realtor firms to seek desirable joint occupants of the types identified by the associate superintendents and/or the school/community representatives.

5) The coordinator of joint occupancy will identify the eligible applicants for the surplus space and seek community reactions to the proposed tenants through public hearings, meetings or surveys.

6) The coordinator of joint occupancy will negotiate with acceptable applicants to share the school space and will develop a lease with maximum benefit to the school system within the intent of the Board of Education policy and these guidelines. The agreements for use of the space must be developed and coordinated with other occupants of the building.

7) The community residents will be informed by the coordinator of joint occupancy of the applicant(s) selected to share the space jointly.

8) In those cases where two or more candidates for the same priority category are equally desired, the space will be leased to the candidate providing the offer most beneficial to MCPS.

E) Lease Agreements:

The superintendent of schools or his designee signs lease agreements on behalf of the Montgomery County schools. The lease agreement should contain relevant terms and conditions to include:

1) Length of lease—preferably two years or more

2) A provision to save the school system harmless against any and all claims, demands, suits, or other forms of liability that may arise out of shared use of space

3) Clauses which describe the insurance to be carried by the tenant

4) A cancellation clause permitting termination at any time by mutual agreement

5) Statements describing the property lease and a subleasing prohibition

6) Services to be provided, if any, by the Montgomery County Public Schools

7) Types of facility modifications permitted
8) Type of activity and hours of operation permitted in the surplus school space
9) Types of expenditures for which the tenant is responsible
10) Types of services the tenant will provide to Montgomery County Public Schools
11) Lease costs for the surplus space
12) Agreement to follow Rules and Regulations as outlined in Section F.

F) Operation of Programs:

The coordinator of joint occupancy will be responsible for the day-to-day operation of the joint occupancy program. He will carefully coordinate the joint occupancy with the building principal ensuring the least possible interference with the educational program. The coordinator will make certain that all joint occupants comply with all lease terms, rules and regulations promulgated by the local school, MCPS, Maryland State Department of Education, Maryland State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and other appropriate agencies, codes and requirements. Prior to occupying surplus school space, each selected tenant will be provided a set of rules and regulations governing the operation of joint occupancy. In addition to the lease terms for the joint occupant, the rules and regulations will cover such additional items as:

1) Parking and access to the building
2) Standards for custodial services, security, trash removal and client control
3) Safety and emergency procedures
4) Use of facilities during school closure, holidays or emergency conditions
5) Use and/or access to site and playground
6) Installation of telephone service
7) Accident and liability insurance
8) Complaint/problem procedures for joint occupant
9) Periodic review of lease.

Administrative History: New Regulation, October 1982.

Cost Categories for Users

Cost Categories	Non-MCPS Educational Programs	Community Programs	County Agencies	Private Enterprise
Gas, oil and electricity	●	●	●	●
Janitorial service	●	●	●	●
Building security			●	●
Trash removal			●	●
Administration	●	●	●	●
Maintenance of building	●*	●	●	●
Building debt				●

*Day care programs are exempted.

15

Community Use of the School District's Stadium

Barbara D. Twardus

THE SEATTLE, Washington, School District believes that the school system *is* the community, and, as such, the community should have access to use of the school system's stadium, which is itself a community landmark. Memorial Stadium is located on one border of the Seattle Center, the complex built for the 1962 World's Fair in the geographical center of the city. It was constructed in 1947 as a war memorial to young soldiers who lost their lives in World War II, and so it has an emotional value for many citizens of Seattle.

Memorial Stadium has a seating capacity for 12,000 people with covered grandstands. It offers many amenities: four locker rooms, parking, food concessions, enclosed press box, ticket booths, dugouts, public address system, headphones, intercom system, event management office and a devoted and supportive custodial staff. In 1967 it became the first high school facility in the nation to feature an artificial turf. One of the major benefits of an artificial surface is that it can withstand considerably more use and requires less maintenance than natural turf fields. Therefore, it became apparent that the facility could handle activities in addition to the high school athletic program. And as the stadium has a prime location in the center of a number of multiuse facilities and is easily accessible by public transportation, nonschool district groups began to request permission to use it.

While the school district believed, on principle, that community groups should be able to use the stadium, it was not in a position to absorb costs for additional uses, particularly those that were not school-related. Thus the school district decided to rent out the facility to cover the cost of services and use, and even to make a profit when possible.

Renting the Stadium

When the stadium is not in use for school programs, it is available, at a charge, to community groups, agencies and special interest groups on a first-come, first-served basis. The majority of requests for use involve athletic activities, primarily soccer and football practices and games. Art fairs and auctions occasionally request use of the covered concourse. And there are many requests for

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unusual activities, ranging from human dominoes to square dances, from rock concerts to attempts at breaking records in the Guinness Book.

From a managerial standpoint, it is much easier to administer the long-term uses—such as a series of soccer practices—than special events. One-time special activities require considerable time and effort in supervision. Yet they sometimes bring in the most money. Rock concerts realize the highest profits. The school district asks for a percentage of the profit rather than a flat rental fee, and so it realizes a sizable income. On past occasions the Seattle School District has received anywhere from $25,000 to $50,000 (gross) for a one-evening concert. Residents of the surrounding area sometimes find rock concerts objectionable, however, and that jeopardizes the relationship of the school district with the community. Therefore the district no longer allows "hard" rock concerts but will consider "soft" rock concerts. Tight controls are essential in contracting for concerts, particularly controls relating to assuring adherence to city noise-level ordinances.

For all nonschool uses, an enthusiastic and supportive custodial staff is extremely important. Each request for use by outside groups has its own special needs and requirements. Members of the custodial staff have to be flexible and creative in order for an event to be successful. For virtually every event they must make judgments that are both in harmony with the intent of the contract and in line with the best protection for the facility.

Considerations such as these have led to the development of school district policies regarding eligibility of users and classes of users and user fees.

The primary factors in determining whether a contract can be issued to a potential user are:

1) whether or not the activity is harmful or *potentially* harmful to the facility
2) whether or not the activity is harmful or *potentially* harmful to the relationship of the Seattle School District with the community
3) whether or not the schedule of the activity conflicts with the schedule of the school program; the school program has priority for use of the facility.

When representatives of the school district meet with prospective users, they seek to identify all activities, both on and off the field, that may take place and especially any problem areas that may need attention. For example, for one rental the users wanted to conduct a series of activities for youth, with several stations placed around the field. One of the activities called for making drawings with paper and ink. To avoid possible damage to the turf, crayons were suggested rather than ink pens. In another case users who wanted to erect a platform on the turf were required to construct a plywood foundation under the legs of the platform to disperse the weight and protect the turf.

Once representatives of the school district determine that an activity can be accommodated, they classify the use and establish the rental fee. Users are charged a fee to cover direct costs (e.g., custodial wages and utilities) as well as indirect costs (e.g., a prorated share of maintenance costs and turf amortization). In short, users are required to pay their fair share of use of the facility. Over the years the fee scale has been revised to reflect users' ability to pay while making sure the Seattle School District does not subsidize nonschool activities or operate the stadium at a financial loss. The following classification of users and user fees has been adopted.

Classes of Users and User Fees

Group I—For Seattle School District initiated or sanctioned K–12 or employee activities, there is no charge. It is the Seattle School District's intent to host its fair share of league, district and state athletic playoff events.

Group II—These include uses by nonprofit organizations. The school district requires that admission charges cover only the cost of programs and facility use. When admission is charged, the rental rate is the cost of the rental or 10 percent of admissions, less costs, plus city tax, whichever is greater.

1) K–12 population, community based: character-building activities of children residing primarily in Seattle city boundaries, such as the Greater Seattle Junior Football Tourney and activities of the Cascade Drum and Bugle Corps, are charged direct costs only.

2) K–12 population, noncommunity based: character-building activities whose participants are primarily outside the Seattle city limits, such as district and state playoffs (beyond fair share), North Seattle League football championships and practice periods for football teams, bands and others outside the Seattle School District, are charged direct costs plus 50 percent of the indirect costs rate.

3) Adult population groups and activities, community based: nonstudent activities whose participants are primarily from within the Seattle city limits, such as collegiate practices and games (soccer, etc.), Seattle Police Guild football practices and Calvary Fellowship concerts, are charged direct costs plus 75 percent of the indirect cost rate.

4) Adult population groups and activities, noncommunity based: nonstudent activities whose participants are primarily nonresidents of the city of Seattle, such as the American Heart Association football game, are charged direct costs plus 90 percent of the indirect cost rate.

Group III—Activities sponsored by profit-making organizations, such as the Coca-Cola-sponsored Kick-Pass-Punt, professional football free agent tryouts and semipro and professional soccer and football games, are charged direct costs plus 110 percent of the indirect cost rate or 10 percent of the admission fee, whichever is greater.

Casual Users—Occasionally other groups request to use the stadium for a short period of time (one hour) for special purposes, such as for a backdrop for fashion photography or for filming documentaries. Casual users must fill out a simple form stating the nature and purpose of the activity. If school district representatives decide that the activity is suitable and can be conducted during normal working hours, then a permit is issued at no charge. The permit also protects the Seattle School District for liability purposes.

Additional User Fees—Additional user fees for stadium facilities and equipment are outlined in the table on page 154.

Marketing

At the present time the Seattle School District has no active marketing plan. Two years ago, use of the stadium slackened off and it sat idle most of the time. The district conducted a review of its purposes and objectives in the belief that rental of this facility needs to be feasible for community groups. Rates were revised to make the stadium more affordable. Less emphasis was placed on

generating a profit, but support for direct and indirect costs was still ensured.

The district's thinking was that if the stadium became more accessible, it would sell itself. That turned out to be correct. Gross revenues nearly tripled over the previous year, and the facility is now used on many more occasions. Requests for use continue to increase.

Contract

While the following is not the actual contract used by the Seattle School District, it addresses the various components included in the district's contract with users of the stadium.

Supervision and Event Management—Crowd control and event management are the sole responsibility of the Tenant, including the payment of all working personnel. Adequate supervisory personnel must be provided to conduct the activity safely with adequate protection for persons and property and in the best interest of the School District. Minimum supervisory and event management personnel are subject to the approval of the District Coordinator of Athletics. The Tenant must comply with all local police and fire department regulations. A designated School District employee shall be on duty as a Stadium Manager when the field is used by nonschool groups, if it is deemed necessary by the District Coordinator of Athletics. The charge for this supervisory person is included in the rental fee.

Parking—No parking privileges shall be available unless special arrangements have been made with the District Coordinator of Athletics in advance of the event.

Equipment and Facilities—Only those facilities and equipment agreed to in the lease agreement will be available for use by the Tenant. The use of any equipment must be approved by the District Coordinator of Athletics, who shall be satisfied that a competent operator is in charge of the equipment during use.

Concessions—The School District shall have the sole and exclusive right to sell or dispense any form of food or beverage consumed on the Premises. The Tenant shall not engage in the selling of any article, except printed souvenir programs, on the Premises without the prior written consent of the School District.

Care of Premises and Responsibility for Damages—The Tenant shall not injure or mar or in any manner deface any part of the Premises, including but not limited to driving, or permitting to be driven, nails, hooks, tacks or screws into any part of the buildings, structure, fields or stands or making or allowing to be made any alterations or changes of any kind to the Premises or building or constructing anything requiring the use of nails or screws on the Premises except as provided in this agreement. The Tenant is responsible for keeping all nonparticipants and unauthorized persons off the artificial surface field at all times. All participants using the artificial surface field shall be required to wear a molded sole shoe or tennis shoe. Crepe paper, soft drinks, gum, coffee, food and other similar items that may stain or damage the artificial surface shall be kept off the field. No animals of any kind shall be allowed on the Premises. No motor vehicles shall be allowed on the artificial surface field. If during the term of this lease any portion of any building, structure, stand, field or grounds forming part of the Premises is damaged by the act, default or negligence of the Tenant or the

Tenant's agents, employees, patrons, guests or any person admitted to the Premises by the Tenant, the Tenant will pay to the School District, upon demand, such sum as shall be necessary to restore the Premises to the condition existing at the time the Tenant took possession of the Premises.

Insurance—The Tenant shall procure personal injury liability insurance with limits of $1,000,000 (one million dollars) per person and $1,000,000 (one million dollars) per occurrence and property damage insurance with limits of $1,000,000 (one million dollars) per occurrence. The Certificate of Insurance shall name the School District as an additional insured and shall be delivered to the District Coordinator of Athletics at least two (2) working days prior to the commencement date of this lease. The policy shall provide that it shall not be cancelled or altered without ten (10) days prior written notice to the District Coordinator of Athletics.

Accidents and Indemnification—The Tenant shall protect, indemnify and hold harmless the School District and its officers and employees from any and all claims, liabilities, damages, expenses or rights of action directly or indirectly growing out of the Tenant's use of the Premises.

Fire Safety and Insurance Standards—The Tenant shall not do or permit the doing of any acts in or upon any portion of the Premises, or bring or keep therein or thereon anything that will in any way conflict with the conditions of any insurance policy upon the Premises or property kept therein, or in any way increase the rate or invalidate any policy of fire insurance upon the Premises or any property kept therein. The Tenant shall not use oil, camphene, kerosene, naptha, gasoline or any other burning fluids for mechanical or other purposes, or any agent other than electricity for illuminating the Premises without the prior consent of the District Coordinator of Athletics. The Tenant shall not use or allow the use of any fireworks of any kind upon the Premises.

Signs—The Tenant shall not post or exhibit or allow the posting or exhibiting of signs, advertisements, show bills, lithographs, posters or cards of any description anywhere on the premises except upon the regular billboards provided by the School District. Only such signs, advertisements, show bills, lithographs, posters or cards as relate to the performance or exhibition to be given by the Tenant on the premises shall be posted by the Tenant upon the billboards except with prior written permission of the District Coordinator of Athletics. The School District reserves the right to remove any objectionable signs, advertisements, show bills, lithographs, posters or cards posted by the Tenant.

Compliance with School District Rules and Laws—The Tenant shall comply fully with all rules and regulations of the School District for the government and management of the Premises and with all Federal and State statutes and City ordinances now or hereafter in force in respect to the Premises and Tenant's activities therein. If the Tenant's attention is called to any violation of School District rules or statutes or ordinances by the Tenant of the Tenant's employees, or any person admitted by the Tenant to the Premises, the Tenant will immediately desist from and correct the violation.

Security and Protection of Persons and Property—The Tenant shall at all times have on hand a sufficient police or security force to maintain order and protect persons and property. The School District reserves the right to establish minimum security force requirements. The School District also reserves the right to eject any objectionable person(s) admitted to the Premises by the Tenant, the

Tenant's agents or employees. The Tenant shall be responsible for restraining any employee, agent or any other person from entering or molesting areas of the Premises not leased by the Tenant.

Alcoholic Beverages Prohibited—The tenant shall not sell, give away or permit the sale or giving away of beer, wine or intoxicating liquors of any kind on the Premises. The Tenant shall be responsible for lawfully screening those persons being admitted to the premises and for confiscating alcoholic beverages, narcotics and all glass containers.

Access—The School District's agents and employees shall at all times have the right to enter into any part of the Premises.

Ticket Sale Funds—The School District reserves the right to place its employee in ticket booths and at gates and entrances to the Premises for the purpose of selling and taking tickets. The School District shall have the first lien and claim on all of the Tenant's receipts for any sum due the School District under the terms of this lease and shall have the right to hold all such funds, provided that the School District's holding of any receipts shall be for the purpose of securing and obtaining any sums due the School District. In the School District's other handling, control, custody and keeping of receipts and funds received at any gate, entrance or ticket booth, the School District shall be acting for the sole accommodation and benefit of the Tenant. As to such receipts and funds, the School District shall be responsible only for gross neglect or bad faith.

Vacating of Premises—Upon termination of this lease, the Tenant shall return the Premises in the same condition as the time of commencement of this lease, except for normal wear and tear. By the time of termination, the Tenant shall have removed all equipment, supplies and materials owned and controlled by the Tenant from the Premises. The School District shall have the right to remove, at the expense of the Tenant, any of the Tenant's effects remaining on the Premises after the expiration or termination of this lease; or, until such removal, the School District shall have the right to charge and collect from the Tenant rent at the same rate per hour or day as is provided for rental of the premises in this lease agreement.

Assignment—The Tenant shall not assign this lease or permit any use of the Premises by any person(s) other than the Tenant, or permit any use of the premises other than herein specified, or sublet the Premises or any part thereof, without the prior written consent of the School District.

Cancellation—The School District reserves the right to cancel this lease if the premises are needed for School District purposes, or if such action is in the School District's best interest. In the event of such cancellation, the School District shall refund any advance payment received from the Tenant. The Tenant shall have no claim or right to damages or other reimbursements for expenses incurred by the Tenant as a result of such cancellation.

Damage or Destruction—In the event the Premises or any part of the Premises are destroyed or damaged by fire, earthquake or any other cause, or if any other unforeseen occurrence renders the School District's performance of this lease impossible, this lease shall terminate, and the Tenant shall pay rental for the Premises at the rate herein specified only up to the time of such termination. The Tenant hereby waives any and all claims for damages or other reimbursement for expenses incurred by the Tenant as a result of such termination.

Vacancy during Term—If the Premises shall become vacant during the term of this lease, the School District shall have the right to reenter at its own option and

relet the Premises and receive the rent therefor. Any rental fees so received shall be applied first to the expenses incurred in reletting the Premises, then to the payment of the rent due under this agreement. The surplus, if any, shall be retained by the School District. The Tenant agrees to pay to the School District, on demand, the balance, if any, of the agreed rental fee remaining after deducting the net rental resulting from any reletting. Nothing herein contained shall be construed as imposing any obligation on the School District to relet or attempt to relet the Premises, or relieving the obligation of the Tenant to pay the full amount of the rental in the event the Premises are not relet.

Default—If the Tenant defaults in the payment of the rental fee herein specified, or if the Tenant defaults in the performance of any other terms of this lease agreement, this lease agreement, at the option of the School District, shall terminate and the School District may reenter the Premises and hold the same against any claim or interest of the Tenant and remove therefrom all persons and property. Such reentry and repossession by the School District shall not release the Tenant from the obligation to pay the full amount of the rental fee.

Synthetic Surfacing—To assure no violation of its warranty, the synthetic surfacing is to be used by the Tenant for only the following uses: football, soccer, lacrosse, field hockey, rugby, cricket, softball, baseball, physical exercises, physical education activities, playground surface, marching band, military drills, maintenance vehicles using pneumatic rubber tires, track and pedestrian traffic and other similar uses.

Summary

Many citizens of a community feel they have "ownership" in school facilities and the "right" to use them. School districts can rarely justify subsidizing nonschool activities, however. A mutually acceptable compromise can be achieved when community groups can afford to use a facility and a school district can recover costs. For some events a financial profit can be realized.

But some profits are intangible. The public relations and goodwill created when a community can use and enjoy a school facility cannot be measured in any financial terms. And a school facility standing idle is of no value at all.

1983–84 Charges for Each Use

Costs	SSD	Nonprofit				Profit
	Group I	Group II(1)	Group II(2)	Group II(3)	Group II(4)	Group III
Direct Costs:						
Cleaning stands	N/C	$110.00	$110.00	$110.00	$110.00	$110.00
Cleaning locker room	N/C	$12.50	$12.50	$12.50	$12.50	$12.50
Cleaning field	N/C	$70.00	$70.00	$70.00	$70.00	$70.00
Cleaning press box	N/C	$12.50	$12.50	$12.50	$12.50	$12.50
Cleaning ticket booth	N/C	$3.00	$3.00	$3.00	$3.00	$3.00
Cleaning stadium office	N/C	$9.00	$9.00	$9.00	$9.00	$9.00
Custodian: Supervisor	N/C	$18.00/hr.	$18.00/hr.	$18.00/hr.	$18.00/hr.	$18.00/hr.
Stadium Manager: Supervisor	N/C	$18.00/hr.	$18.00/hr.	$18.00/hr.	$18.00/hr.	$18.00/hr.
Field lights	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C	N/C
Indirect Costs: capital investment, turf amortization, maintenance, utilities, district administrative services	N/C	N/C	$48.00/hr.	$72.00/hr.	$86.00/hr.	$106.00/hr.

N/C: no charge

Part Five
Building Confidence

16

Home, School, Community Relations

George Kliminski

EDUCATION is the sum of many parts, including not only what is available through the school program but also through the home, the community, the church, the peer group and many other agencies and institutions. The school may play an integral role in assisting each of these parts to be a more effective education agent and, in so doing, carry out the important function of becoming an agent for improving life for all people in a community. In reality, the school and the community are inseparable, with the school reflecting the desires and values of the community. The school board sets policy and approves financial expenditures as a representative body of the community. Informally, various groups are constantly attempting to exert influence and pressure on educational decision makers to make the school more closely mirror the values and needs held by the special interest groups. How school officials respond to the different demands placed on them by all of the interests in a community will determine how effective the school is in carrying out its mission.

Havighurst and Neugarten (1967) describe three basic approaches that the school can utilize to carry out the role prescribed for it by the community. The first approach is called the traditional school. In this setting the school is seen as an agent that has the highly specialized job of training children's minds and teaching them intellectual and vocational skills; it becomes separate from the community. A second possible relation between the school and the community is one in which the school is a model of the community itself. In a school such as this there is an emphasis on socialization skills. Schoolchildren are likely to develop a miniature store that they run or to carry out class projects that have some effect upon the community. The school becomes a reflection of what exists in the community. A third possible relationship that can be developed is the community school model. In this approach the school operates directly as an agent for improving the community. People of all ages may become pupils and are involved in many school activities. The school serves the entire community, not just children of school age.

As school officials look at community relations, they must examine the type of school they wish to become. The traditional school does not require specialized personnel with a broad understanding of the community. There are relatively few

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educational systems that operate on this model in today's society. The school as a model of the community requires that school staff understand the makeup of the community. Special emphasis is placed on creating a school that is similar to the community and reflects its values and structure. Within this setting students can gain experience that they will use as they complete school programs. The major focus continues to be creating an appropriate learning environment for school-age children. Schools of this type often have a person on staff who can interact skillfully with various parts of the community. This staff person has the responsibility of communicating with community groups to assure that the model the school creates is a reflection of the community. In the third model the school focuses not only on the educational needs of children but also on the development of educational, cultural, social and recreational programs for all people in the community in cooperation with other community agencies. This type of school has a specialized staff person who has developed facilitation skills along with the communication skills necessary for the school to function as a resource for the entire community.

School Public Relations

The National School Public Relations Association (Armistead, 1982) defines school public relations as

> *a planned and systematic two-way process of communications between an educational organization and its internal and external publics. Its program serves to stimulate a better understanding of the role, objectives, accomplishments and needs of the organization. Educational public relations is a management function that interprets public attitudes, identifies the policies and procedures of an individual organization with the public interest, and executes a program of action to encourage public involvement and to earn public understanding and acceptance.*

Key words in the definition are planned, systematic and two-way.

Planning a Program—It is impossible to plan a program in school and community relations without a thorough understanding of the community itself. Since each school community is a very complex unit, care must be taken to assure that the personnel of the school know the people and the expectations of the community it serves. What are the people of the community like? What is the history of the development of the community? How has the community changed? What is the general makeup of the community? These questions, when answered, will begin to give school people a picture of a community in which the school is located and a basis on which to begin planning for positive joint relations.

Planners will find that census data are an invaluable starting point in describing the local population's economic status, educational levels, age breakdown and so on. They will need to ask a number of additional questions, however. How many households have children in school? What percentage of parents represent minority groups? How many retired people reside in the community? How many people move in and out of the community each year? Planners will also need to find out where people work and what they do, how many mothers

work and who the informal leaders in the community are. Planners generally seek to get as complete a picture as possible of who lives in the community. They will find it necessary to go outside of the school building to get this important information. Stops at the city and county buildings, the regional planning commission, chamber of commerce, newspaper office and library are essential.

A second step in planning is finding out where people in the community meet. What types of service clubs and organizations exist? Do people regularly get together in local bars? Where do people go to church, and how active are religious organizations? Do people socialize within or outside of the school community? Often one can find the information that is needed by driving around the community and making lists of what appear to be major gathering places. The library or the chamber of commerce often has a list of clubs and organizations and their elected leaders. The school administration needs to keep its eyes and ears open to determine where people are gathering and with whom they meet regularly.

A third step in planning consists of finding out where people get their information and from whom. Is most information received through the media, telephone, face-to-face or some other mechanism? It may be of interest to note that rarely do people list schools as their major source of school and education information. School news is usually passed from individual to individual and reflects the perception of each person.

Finally, one needs to gather information about the perceptions and expectations that people in the school community have about the educational programs that exist. Are people pleased with the performance of the school program? Do they believe the schools are effective? How do they rate the local school system when comparing it to other schools in the state or nation? A starting point for determining how the community's schools rate compared to others is the Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the Public School, published annually in the September issue of the *Kappan*, an educational journal of Phi Delta Kappa. The poll is intended to be a source of information for educators concerning trends and opinions, and local officials are welcome to use the questions from the poll in their home communities.

Systematic Two-Way Communications—School systems have become aware of the need to develop an effective community relations program, but they have often limited communication to times of crisis or to the period leading to a millage or bond referendum. Another tendency is to convey only good news to the community and to suppress news that does not depict the school in a positive light. The school must develop a plan to get information to all of the people on a regular basis. This may be done through a newsletter mailed to all postal addresses, regularly scheduled meetings, local media presentations, billboards and other means. A good communications system has at least two methods of communicating with each identified public on a regular basis.

Two-way communications systems are the most difficult to develop and manage. Not only does the school need to send information to each of its publics in a systematic fashion, but it also needs to develop the means for receiving information from its constituencies. Advisory committees, hotlines, public hearings, suggestion boxes, surveys and telephone calls are examples of ways to get information from the public on how they view the school. The school must also be ready and willing to keep the public informed about actions taken as a result of

two-way communications. All too often schools develop communication systems that are sporadic, reach only parents of school-age children and do not allow for a two-way flow of information.

School Community Relations Goals—A complete school and community relations program emphasizes face to face communication that is continuous and reaches all publics. Based on numerous studies, Bowles and Fruth (1976) developed a set of broad principles upon which a school community program should be based. The principles or assumptions are:

> *1) Home-school-community relations involves much more than the effective use of media. Communications media are definitely a part of a successful program, but their use should not be the total program.*
>
> *2) The benefits of any instructional or organizational change must be made visible and tangible to the various subpublics in the school community. Thus, members of school subpublics must be involved early in implementation efforts and answers to questions must be in concrete, specific and understandable terms.*
>
> *3) An effective program of home-school-community relations involves working very closely with parents. This includes parent volunteers, home-school visits and parent participation in educational decision-making.*
>
> *4) School staff members should use the educational resources available in the community. This action will both enhance the instructional program and increase the staff's knowledge of the community.*
>
> *5) Members of the school staff must expand their concept of community. Educational affairs should not be considered in isolation from community affairs and municipal issues.*
>
> *6) Students are the most important subpublic in a school. They are a primary source of information for their parents; they affect the way that their parents and other adults respond, and the way they perceive their education now will influence their view of schools when they are adults.*
>
> *7) The relationship between the home, school and community should be continuous and ongoing. Crisis management should be avoided as a program is easier to build and maintain during times of tranquility than in times of torment.*
>
> *8) Home-school-community relations is not equivalent with an advisory committee. While community advisory committees, ad hoc parental committees and study groups are good strategies, they are but one part of a complete program.*

Community Demographics—The population of the United States has changed drastically since 1950. During the 1950s and 1960s approximately one-half of all residents were under 18 years of age. In 1990 estimates are that four out of every five people will be over 18. The annual number of live births decreased from 4.3 million in 1961 to 3.1 million in 1973. Since that time there has been a slight increase in live births to approximately 3.6 million in 1980. Single parent families are on the increase, including single parent families headed by males.

Between 1970 and 1980 a total of 7,000 school buildings were closed in the United States. While a number of these buildings were converted into community facilities or interagency buildings, others were developed into condo-

miniums, and some were razed to make way for new structures. During this same period of time the fastest growing segment of education has been education for nontraditional age groups often in nontraditional settings. The number of adults attending classes doubled between 1970 and 1980; during 1980 more than 22 million people, or 14 percent of the adult population, attended some type of schooling. There was a 70.5 percent increase in preschool enrollments between 1970 and 1980, and this increase took place during a time of basic decline in the number of preschoolers in the United States. Business and industry spent as much money on training and education-related programs as the total budget of all colleges and universities in the United States.

Simply stated, the educational needs of a large segment of the population have changed dramatically over a relatively short period of time. These changing needs and the attendant demands on schools for new educational programs have caused a large number of schools to design new approaches to relate to and provide programs for these populations. These changes have also brought on the need for schools to employ a different type of professional on their staffs.

Community Involvement

The purpose of community involvement is to allow citizens to have a role in decision making related to school issues and problems and to inform school staff about community conditions, needs and goals. The school must recognize that by inviting community involvement in the decision-making process there is an implicit agreement that reasonable changes in how the school operates will be made on the basis of community input. A school system should not develop mechanisms for community involvement unless it believes that citizens have something to offer and it intends to be responsive to community desires. It is also important to define the role and function of the various community involvement structures that are created so that a clear understanding exists between the board of education and the community about how decisions will be made. In almost all cases the community will make recommendations to the board of education for decisions to be made by the board.

School systems that have implemented community involvement activities have found that community members need training so that they can be effective. It is the school's responsibility to provide appropriate training sessions. Experience has also shown that the schools must be prepared to share all available information with citizens who are part of the involvement process. Without adequate information no citizen group can hope to make recommendations in the best interest of the school and community. The mechanism most often used by schools to expand community involvement is an advisory or community council. Care must be taken, however, to use other vehicles such as volunteer programs, community forums, surveys and the like. School administrators should not get caught in the trap of believing that because an advisory council exists, the community is involved.

In the school community relation approach, which was described in the first part of this chapter, the emphasis on involving people from the community has been on improving the educational program for children. The primary public with which the school works is made up of school-age children who generally range in age from 5 to 18 years old. Little emphasis is placed on programs for

preschoolers or for people over the age of 18. In light of the changing demographics described above and the changing needs of our society, a number of schools are implementing a concept of community education. Under this approach schools place an emphasis on involving people from the community for community improvement and on programming for people of all ages with cooperation from community agencies.

New Personnel—Schools are hiring coordinators of community relations to assist school districts to develop better working relationships with the community. In the past the coordinator of community relations was often a media-oriented person whose main responsibility was to tell the school story through the use of newsletters, brochures and posters. Today's community relations specialist is seen as a member of the management team who updates, implements, directs and reviews the total community relations program.

Other school systems are creating a position that is generally called a community education or community services director. This person has the responsibility of assisting the community in defining its needs and wants and in locating the resources to implement appropriate programs. The director of community education has a primary role of developing a two-way communications system between members of the community and a variety of institutions, agencies and organizations within the community, as well as facilitating an interaction among agencies so that resources are used as efficiently as possible.

Community Education—One approach that is being utilized by a large number of school districts to improve school and community relations is the concept of community education. The philosophy of community education evolving over the past 50 years is based on the ideal that community residents should be involved in identifying their own needs and wants and that community resources are available to develop programs to meet those needs. School districts that implement community education recognize that the characteristics of the communities they serve have changed dramatically in the past several years and will continue to change. These changes have brought about a need for different approaches to the delivery of educational, recreational, social and cultural programs.

Typically community education is seen as a means to achieve educational objectives that reach out to a broad range of community needs. Doll (1982) lists a sample of these objectives in explaining why the George Gund Foundation of Cleveland, Ohio, became involved in assisting school districts in implementing community education.

> *1) the need to make better use of school facilities, particularly at a time of declining enrollments*
>
> *2) the need to involve citizens more effectively in dealing with educational problems*
>
> *3) the importance of making better use of community resources to enhance the delivery of educational services*
>
> *4) the importance of finding ways to reduce educational costs while still maintaining quality.*

The National Community Education Association (1983) has developed an agenda for community education detailing another set of societal needs that can be met through community education. These are:

1) moving public education into a genuine working partnership of home, school and community

2) integrating citizens of all ages into the total learning process

3) using the entire community as a learning environment

4) expanding the educational delivery system to include community agencies and the public and private sectors

5) designing new roles for administrators, teachers, students and citizens for ensuring personalized learning for all ages

6) increasing systematic citizen participation in identifying needs, finding resources and assuming responsibility for solving problems

7) involving the full range of citizens in shared decision-making processes

8) encouraging organizations, agencies and institutions to become more responsive to the expressed needs and interests of citizens

9) fostering increased collaboration among community organizations to meet the expressed needs of local communities

10) promoting the effectiveness of community-based organizations

11) promoting volunteer citizen involvement in public education and community improvement

12) increasing the efficiency of educational and community systems through better use of existing and developing technology.

The Charles Stewart Mott Foundation of Flint, Michigan, has been involved with community education since the 1930s and continues to be active today. In a Mott Foundation special report (1982, p. 11), the criteria most often used to define school-based community education efforts are listed as:

1) educational program for school-age children: expansion and improvement of K-12 education, stressing relevance, community involvement and the use of community resources to enhance classroom teaching

2) extended and maximum use of public school facilities: public school board of education support for an involvement in development of the local community education plan, including extended use of public school facilities for community residents—programs for children, youth and adults

3) citizen involvement: mechanisms that provide for continued, cross-aged citizen input into program planning and development. This includes, but is not exclusive to, the use of a representative community advisory council

4) leadership: a qualified person with training in community education having a work role based on a community education job description

5) interagency cooperation and expanded delivery of community services: a regular contact with community agencies and organizations for the purposes of (a) joint planning, (b) avoiding duplication efforts and (c) ensuring expanded community services through existing service systems

6) needs assessment and planning: a documented community planning effort using sound data involving a cross-section of community residents, which includes a sequence of needs and resource assessment, goal prioritizing and evaluation.

School districts have found that by organizing a community education program to meet the goals, objectives and needs described above, there is an improvement in the relationships that exist between the home, the school and the many agencies and organizations within the community. This in turn leads to the development of a more positive school and community climate in which all residents feel a sense of ownership of the public schools.

The results of the implementation of a community education program are often varied because the programs are based on the characteristics and needs of the community itself. Examples of what can occur in community schools have been described in a booklet produced by the National Community Education Association (1983, pp. 4-7) and are listed below. These should be regarded as ways in which a school could be involved in pursuing educational excellence for all members of a community.

- *Community schools across the country are being used to recruit high school dropouts to attend night classes at the community school or to attend ABE/GED classes.*
- *Community schools are using local business people to teach evening classes in entrepreneurship for high school students interested in starting small businesses. Some of those businesses are being started while the students are still in high school.*
- *Business partnerships have been initiated in community schools across the country where students who are high potential dropouts are given paid positions that fit around their class schedules to keep them in school.*
- *Many community schools around the country are inviting senior citizens and other adults to come back to school, during the regular school day, to take high school classes with space available. Some are even working on degree programs.*
- *Community schools actively involve advisory committees in the affairs of the school. These committees are broadly representative of the neighborhoods which the schools serve.*
- *Community schools in bilingual communities are recruiting bilingual volunteers to help classroom teachers deal with the myriad of problems associated with students who cannot speak English in an English-speaking classroom.*
- *Many community schools are getting directly involved in coordinating neighborhood health care programs to deal with medical and prenatal problems which directly affect the ability of students to participate in classroom activities.*
- *The National Resources for Youth program has teens working in Head-start centers before, during and after school to earn income. The teens are recruited through community schools.*
- *Numerous community schools are involved in recruiting volunteers to help classroom teachers teach schoolchildren how to develop survival skills*

in classrooms and then to help the students organize skill-trading workshops and neighborhood gardens in the community.

- *Community schools all over the country are taking inventory of the resources available through their local businesses to help in the schools' curricular areas.*
- *Community schools can help students create books for other students and parents on which television shows can help kids learn to read.*
- *Community schools regularly increase the amount of learning time available to teach students basic skills by keeping the schools open before and after school, on weekends and holidays, with educational offerings available to students on a volunteer basis. They are, in fact, increasing the structured learning time available to students.*
- *Many community schools are providing training to students in areas that the local school system has decided it cannot provide through the required school program. Community school activities in drama, music, art, athletics, etc. are provided regularly in many systems.*
- *Community schools actively involve volunteers of all ages to assist with the required curriculum of the schools.*
- *Community school staff members are actively involving the trade unions in putting on senior programs, programs for preschoolers and schoolchildren in self-help and education courses in their neighborhoods and housing projects.*
- *Computer literacy and access to minicomputers at the local school are priorities for many community schools. In some districts community fund-raisers are being conducted to buy computers. Local business people are being used during the school day to help students learn to use the computers and then they are made available for general community use in the evening, all through the efforts of community schools.*
- *Community schools in Alaska are working with classroom teachers on ways to use community resources in their classrooms through tele-conferencing. Teachers are using resource people from around the world in their clasrooms, including a recent teleconference with astronauts orbiting the earth.*
- *Community schools regularly train classroom teachers on how to make maximum use of classroom volunteers, and then recruit the volunteers to help.*

Whether the schools adopt a school public relations model or a community education model, the results will be a greater involvement with the public and a greater understanding of what the community believes the school should be doing. The schools are beginning to view people from the community as clients, with the school providing what the public is demanding and willing to pay for. This marketing approach will result in better educational systems for more people and in better communities as well.

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17

Image Can't Be Left to Chance

Margaret Anthony

CONFIDENCE in the public schools has declined. To restore confidence, new leaders—not just school administrators—must be permitted to emerge. Ideas from the local community need to be incorporated into the school's communications system. No matter whether the topic is bond issues or boundary lines, desegregation or double sessions, declining enrollments or discipline, it is the community and staff working together that will strengthen our public schools. Only a strong school will generate public confidence.

Public relations really means public involvement in schools. Decisions will need to be made collaboratively. They will not always be 50 to 50, but all persons should have an equal part in the input. Joint action requires interdependence and cooperation. Openness and trust are vital ingredients in a communications system and decision-making process that work.

Sharing power and encouraging citizens to make contributions to public education bring a shared accountability and responsibility. Channels of communication are opened. The old Chinese proverb bares restating:

Tell me: I forget
Show me: I remember
Involve me: I understand.

Schools belong to the public, not to education professionals.

Communications

A school system may have a professional member on its staff whose sole responsibility is to maintain good public relations, but if the product is bad, no public relation techniques will create a good image. Therefore, the first step to good communication is a good product—a healthy organization. Note, I did not say *perfect*. Communication does not always have to be positive and uplifting, but it does need to be truthful. People will accept areas of weakness if they know there is a long-term history of truthful, clear communications. They will accept the flaw if they know they can help improve it and have a say in the solution.

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For an organization to be healthy, it must have good communications, and that means two-way communications. Cicero is supposed to have said, "God gave us two ears and only one mouth. In view of the way we use them, it is probably a very good thing that this arrangement is not reversed." If there is a good bridge between the home and the schools, between the community and the school system, communication cannot be one-way. Communication skills require not only the ability to write and speak well but also to listen, to be empathetic and to accept feedback. The reason for communicating is to distribute information, to inquire and to persuade. Communications must include not only members of the external community such as parents and taxpayers but also elements of the internal structure such as administrators, teachers, support staff and teacher unions and associations.

Printed school publications, whether for orientation or any other communications purpose, should be prepared with Kossen's (1978, p. 59) acronym in mind: KISS—Keep It Short and Simple. The writing should be clear and free of educational jargon. Important information can be highlighted with different sizes of type or by underlining. Eye appeal is essential; photographs and other artwork will help. The information should be updated regularly.

Establishing good communications with the media is essential, too. Instead of complaining about how the local newspaper twists words and takes them out of context, school administrators should work on building personal relationships with media personnel. They might invite reporters to lunch to discuss how school efforts can make news reporting easier. Reporters should regularly receive calendars of athletic events—and tickets if possible. They should be invited to school plays and other performances. A mailbox for the local newspaper in the school's central office will make sure the news staff receives copies of committee reports, budgets and negotiated contracts. And the newspaper's phone number should be on the office wall—and dialed often.

Not everyone reads the newspaper, however, and radio and television should also be encouraged to cover school news. By law these media must set aside a certain amount of air time for topics of public concern, and schools can make good use of it to get their messages across.

Involving the Community in the Schools

Students are a daily source of news about the school system. The old saying, "If you believe everything your child says happens at school, we'll believe everything that he or she says happens at home," always gets a laugh, but it should remind us that students are very powerful components of the school system's image. They can reflect a happy, warm supportive environment, or they can spread boredom and despair. In addition, these same students, when they graduate, will be voting members in the community. As students are important components of a two-way communications system, they should be represented on school committees that have real decision-making powers.

But students are not always the best means for communicating with parents. Distributing information through schoolchildren automatically restricts readership by eliminating senior citizens and taxpayers with no school-age children. And we all know that children tend to lose items between school and home,

although stuffing materials into report cards does increase the chances of their being read!

It is through their children, however, that parents become involved in the schools. They are interested in the children's academic progress, behavior and effort. Sending home samples of student work helps parents know what is currently being covered in the classroom. A concrete way to demostrate student growth is to save papers from September and send them home with work done in January or June. Teachers should send home notes about good classroom behavior, too.

The fastest way to make our schools known to the entire public, however, is to get the public into our schools. James Comer said of citizen advocacy: "The presence of parents in the school sends a message to the community that the school cares about the children and the community. It sends a message to the children that the parents expect them to perform well socially and academically."

An open door policy means that visitors are welcome any time and any day. The risk the school takes is that visitors may not always see a top performance, but what they do see accurately reflects the school, and honesty is more important than good impressions. Parents and visitors do not need to attend fancy productions to become involved with the schools; they need to see the school's daily life.

The school building itself communicates to parents and other visitors. Attractive bulletin boards displaying student art and samples of good tests can help the school make a point about its achievements. Members of the community with special interests can be asked to share their collections for displays. Local artists might be willing to loan or donate some of their works for hallways and the library.

It has always been fairly easy to get parents into the schools. Traditional activities, like parent conferences and school open houses, can establish good communications. Parents and teachers might discuss, for example, whether they are using the same behavior-shaping procedures. Teachers might share the children's work through classroom poetry readings and computer demonstrations. Parents might accompany classes on field trips. For parents who work, evening sessions can let them try out science and computer equipment for themselves, and videotapes of classroom activities can let them see actual lessons. Not only are these parents learning about new teaching methods, but they are seeing how tax money is spent.

Innovative activities involving parents, teachers and students can build camaraderie. Picnics, pancake breakfasts and potluck suppers bring people together in informal settings and encourage understanding and trust. Yearly traditions quickly spring up when parents direct activities like baking bread for Thanksgiving or making potato latkes for Hanukkah. These activities fill the classrooms with tantalizing aromas, and children have an experience the teacher may not have had the time or expertise to prepare.

It is important that community involvement not be limited to parents. The school should work to involve other segments of the community, too. Elderly people who belong to the local senior center might be asked to attend a student play. Classes can adopt senior citizens or invite grandparents to lunch. Nursery school children can be given tours of the school building with their teachers. Community members with certain kinds of specialties can be asked to share their

expertise. An electronics expert, for example, might donate time to fix the school's TV antenna, or a local physician might incubate throat cultures for early strep identification or speak to the PTA about infections.

Volunteers are an important source of community participation, and it's essential that they be treated well. They should be phoned early on late openings and no school days as part of the regular staff emergency phone chain. School administrators might also encourage them to sign up as substitute aides, librarians, secretaries and teachers, so that they can be paid when they substitute.

The school's facilities should be made available to the community. With an aging society, support for school budgets will be easier to build if adult classes are held in school buildings. Neighborhood programs before and after school hours can be encouraged, too, especially the use of special equipment like typewriters and computers or gymnasium facilities. Schools can be used for health fairs, book fairs and job fairs. Scouts can meet in classrooms and be asked to undertake projects like picking up litter on school grounds or planting flowers around the flag pole. A local bird club that meets in the school might put bird feeders at classroom windows that will serve as teaching devices, too.

Getting members of the community into the schools will help school administrators know what they're thinking, but there are other means of taking the community pulse, too. Informal networks—like clergymen or hairdressers who talk to their customers—are important for school administrators to tap into. Random phone surveys and PTA questionnaires can also be revealing. Citizen advisory groups are particularly helpful. The goal is a sharing of ideas.

Just as important as bringing the community into the schools is getting the schools out into the community. Local merchants might be asked to display student works. Student choirs might perform at a local shopping mall, or home economics and industrial arts students exhibit their projects. The school band should march in local parades and the school glee club sing at local nursing homes. Other school musical groups can perform at building dedications and retirement parties. Students in sewing classes might make clothing for children in local day care centers.

More and more schools and businesses are forming partnerships. Businesses may be willing to share staff, donate equipment, loan materials, fund a faculty position or even adopt a school. Student field trips to job sites translates school learning into reality; so do internships and part-time jobs.

To start this process, a staff member will have to contact industrial and commercial leaders. This may be a new role for a teacher, one that requires flexible scheduling and work days. Or students can contact businesses and draw up a list of employers willing to hire students. These businesses should be recognized in school newspapers; school book covers, programs and brochures can carry their advertisements. Along with local business and industry, schools of education, local universities and professional associations should also be brought into partnerships with the schools.

Special events and activities build the school's image in the community and serve the community at the same time. The school might sponsor a fundraiser, for example, to help restore the Statue of Liberty, or students could jump rope for contributions to the annual drive of the American Heart Association. At Thanksgiving schoolchildren might collect canned food for distribution to needy families. They can advertise the can drive with posters and decorate the containers in

which the cans will be collected. They might also keep track of contributions with poster-size graphs. Or students can produce a yearly town calendar using old school photographs and including information about school enrollments, budgets and educational goals. The local newspaper that know about activities like these may send staff photographers to record and promote them.

Perhaps most important, involving parents, community members and schoolchildren in the school's decision-making process automatically leads to better communication and public relations. Parents might be allowed to choose morning or afternoon kindergarten sessions. They should be included on report card revision committees and school bus contract committees. They should help plan school calendars and be present at school board budget hearings.

Involving parents and community members in decisions makes it obvious that public relations and communication are not a one-way street or a one-time activity. Communications should be an integral part of every staff member's job description.

Improving Public Relations Inside the Schools

A healthy school system has employees who know they are cared for and that their opinions are respected. The climate is one of trust and cooperative endeavor. Staff members give because they know that in a time of need they'll receive. In *In Search of Excellence*, Peters and Waterman emphasize the importance of "creating winners." Administrators should provide opportunities for all faculty and staff—and students—to know success. Many systems are so busy hiring outside consultants and experts to run in-service workshops that they fail to recognize the strength and talents of their own staffs.

Even mundane jobs can be exciting in the right atmosphere. Teachers should be encouraged to share in decision making.They should be asked to share information and ideas gained at conferences that colleagues were unable to attend. Activities that bind people together, that share ownership of ideas, programs and decisions, clearly show employees that the administration values their contributions.

Enlightened and supportive policies establish trustful relationships. The administration might consider paying staff for unused sick leave or instituting a job-sharing policy that allows staff to rotate in positions. Low-cost counseling might be included with insurance benefits, and employee assistance programs might help with drug, alcohol and family problems that affect job performance.

Administrators should not underestimate the importance of times—like TGIF—when staff members can laugh and commiserate with each other about the week's work. A process of healing takes place when friends share ideas outside the walls of the school bureaucracy. It may be easier for a teacher to tell the principal about a problem in the unthreatening atmosphere of Friday's watering hole than in the administrative office. Staff activities like St. Patrick's Day lunches or chili bake-offs also bring people together in morale-improving ways. When teachers tell jokes, exchange personal experiences and visit with each other, they are not wasting time. They are participating in a process that ensures the health of the organization. Understanding, acceptance and even appreciation are the results.

Every administrator needs to emerge from his or her nook and experience unprocessed communication. Sometimes elaborate communication networks remove the person at the center from what's really happening, and it is important for administrators to renew contacts with the day-to-day life of the schools. Department chairpersons should visit classrooms; principals should do lunch and bus duty; superintendents should teach reading groups. And all school administrators can benefit from Kossen's (1978, pp. 428-29) short course in public relations:

The six most important words:
"I admit I made a mistake"

The five most important words:
"You did a good job"

The four most important words:
"What is your opinion?"

The three most important words:
"If you please"

The two most important words:
"Thank you"

The least important word:
"I"

Schools must allow room for dissenters. Grievance procedures help protect the individual. Shutting off dissent may shut off the nonconformist who just might have the new direction or creative solution. Reducing barriers to communication will reduce hostility. Responses such as "It won't work," "We've tried that before" or "We have too much to do now to take on another project" stop communication rather than promoting it. "Body language" and silence itself are means of communicating, too, and their message is often negative.

Administrators need to be aggressive about asking for feedback. Many people have ideas on ways to improve things, but they do not make those ideas known because they were never asked. School officials should hold exit interviews with employees who are leaving and solicit their ideas and suggestions. They should ask new teachers if the staff orientation really helped them. The goal is to create active communication.

Good communication with staff requires written materials of many forms, including board of education policy, teacher and support staff contracts, building handbooks containing playground rules, lunchroom codes of behavior, procedures for ordering supplies, copies of schedules, lists of duties and additional assignments, lesson plans for substitutes, guidelines for parent conferences, one page memos, news flashes, mail on routing slips, notices for vacancies, computer printouts, letters, reports and catalogs. This information may seem to be emanating from the top down, but it need not be formulated by the lone administrator. Advisory councils, faculty senates, curriculum councils and committees with representatives from all areas, certificated and noncertificated, allow maximum staff contribution to decision making, scheduling and textbook adoption. Faculty meetings should not be mere formalities but exciting dialogues. The final

product may be sent in a one-way direction providing the process maximizes interaction.

No one will dispute the speed of grapevines, but if they are the only way school employees receive information, the system is just hit and miss. Administrators often find that school newsletters are a good way to convey information and recognize staff achievements. Newsletters can contain calendars of important events and meetings; information on meetings that not everyone could attend; news of marriages, births and deaths; staff workshops, awards and distinctions, community contributions and publications; and even scores for bowling leagues and softball teams. They can share ideas and provide a forum for opposing or dissenting views on all kinds of subjects. Teacher unions and the central district administration often find newsletters useful, too.

When morale inside the school is low, it is difficult to engender public enthusiasm, much less confidence, in the public schools. At the same time the teachers have little confidence in the community. The August 1983 issue of *Instructor* reported that more than 79 percent of the teachers responding to a poll gave C, D, and F grades to parents and communities. When staff members are filing grievances, striking or frequently absent, it is a sign that the internal organization of the school system needs improvement.

Improving Public Relations with Boards and Taxpayers

The board of education has the difficult role of being both active listener to taxpayers and vocal advocate of school policies. The best way to ensure public confidence is to allow public input. Business and industry leaders who have sponsored school partnerships should be encouraged to serve on the board of education. They have some firsthand experience with the schools.

Other methods can be used to ensure public access to school boards. Calendars of meetings and meeting topics can be prepared a year in advance, and each meeting should have a published agenda. Concerned citizens need to know that their letters will be read, and read publicly, when appropriate.

The board of education of the Mansfield Public Schools in Connecticut rotates the site of each board meeting to assure that board members see the schools at firsthand. In addition, each board member adopts one or two schools and makes a special effort to participate in their functions during the school year. Board representatives as well as principals report on school openings in September. While board members are careful not to enter into the daily management of the schools they adopt, their close contact with these schools gives them a comprehensive understanding of day-to-day problems and long-range needs and goals.

Cooperative programs among public agencies, including the school system, demonstrate to the public that the schools are working hard to be fiscally responsible. Even more important, they build goodwill all round.

In Mansfield the town council and board of education prepared a wish list and distributed it to citizens by bulk mail and drop-offs in public places. Copies were also sent home with students. Included on the list were all kinds of items, ranging from plants and grow lights for the middle school lobby to a bicycle rack for the town's swimming pool. As it turned out, a local elementary school had a bicycle rack it was not using, and the $500 piece of equipment was transferred to the

park department. One school had its playground expanded by fill dirt excavated during the construction of a senior center. And private citizens contributed couches, refrigerators, sewing machines, typewriters, cameras, clothes for theater productions, cooking equipment and small appliances including toasters, electric mixers, frying pans and popcorn makers.

Other cooperative programs in Mansfield include a school bus service for children in a nonprofit after-school day care center housed in an elementary school. When some electrical problems developed at an elementary school, students at the local technical high school did the repairs and made a big impression on the schoolchildren. Parents on their way to and from work pick up and return loan kits from local children's museums.

The cooperative attitudes and real savings these program engender build confidence in the public schools that pays off at bond issue elections and all year long.

Responding to Complaints and Crises

Good communication is a two-way street. While most contacts between the school and the community are pleasant and positive, there will inevitably be criticism and even caustic remarks. How complaints are handled can make the difference between an effective communication and one that seems arbitrary and capricious. Active listening is important. A terse response with a denial only damages relations. Denials should be explained with reference to specific board of education policy, school bus safety considerations or a teacher contract clause. By speaking directly to the issue, the school administrator can also head off future problems of a similar nature.

Schools occasionally face emergency situations, like early closings, racial disturbances or bus accidents, that require quick action and clear communication. Parents should not learn about crises from hearsay or rumor. They need to know that systems are in place for emergency phone chains or hotlines.

It is important to remember that responding responsibly to negative criticism is a way that weaknesses can be improved, individual needs accommodated and the school system strengthened. Communication that works two ways transmits the positive as well as the negative. The only communication a school system need fear is no communication at all.

A Public Relations Review

A sound public relations program need be neither expensive nor complicated. This review suggests some ideas and activities that can improve relations with students, parents and the community and thus build confidence in the schools:

- Give new students, parents and first-time visitors a welcome letter and information packet when they arrive at the school. The packet can contain a school map (with grade levels and teachers' names); an outline of the administrative structure; information on enrollment; and summaries describing enrichment programs such as music, art and physical education. Prominent items in the packet also should include a simple explanation of curriculum and a statement of the school's philosophy.
- Make sure the school favorably impresses visitors. Decorate the halls with student art and examples of good tests. Keep bulletin boards up-to-date and filled

with news of coming events, teachers' and students' accomplishments and special programs.

- Make sure report cards, whether they're handwritten or computer printed, are clear and easy to understand. Whether the news on the card is good or bad, report cards never should be a school's only communication with parents.
- Parent-teacher conferences should be held before and after report cards are issued. This practice reduces unpleasant surprises for parents and gives teachers and parents a better picture of a child's strengths and weaknesses.
- Encourage teachers to use the telephone to communicate with parents. Telephone conferences save time and money, and they start a dialogue on a child's needs. A teacher can tell a parent when extra homework and study are needed to avoid a failing grade, and parents can voice some of their concerns to teachers.
- Don't make episodes of student misbehavior the only cause for contacting parents; inform parents of improvements in academic performance and conduct. This contact reinforces student improvements and gives parents the good feeling of being involved with their child's successes.
- Recognize the working schedules of parents when scheduling open houses. An open house in the morning, with coffee and orange juice, will attract some parents. An evening open house, complete with babysitting service, will attract others. Open houses on fixed days and times may be excluding significant numbers of parents.
- Encourage teachers to visit their students' homes when appropriate. A quick stop to drop off work for a sick child, to speak to parents about a misbehaving child or to offer a ride to a child who has missed the bus emphasizes the staff's commitment to students.
- Send home information on special events at school. Let parents know about field trips, standardized tests and such special courses as sex education before they take place. As a result, the number of parents who volunteer to help will increase, and the number of parents who are upset by these activities will decrease.
- Start a quarterly school newsletter that might be produced by the parent-teacher organization. Parent volunteers might do the typing, duplicating and distributing. Newsletters inform parents of school activities, new equipment and curriculum changes. A newsletter also might contain biographies of school staff members and announcements of the courses they have taken, the articles they published and the grants they have won.
- Encourage parents and community volunteers to come to the schools. When they go out into the community, these volunteers spread a positive image of the schools. Community representatives who serve on committees, mail questionnaires and conduct telephone polls let people know schools are interested in hearing from them.

Conclusion

The basis of good communication is a strong, well-balanced school program, one that meets the needs of both students and staff. Communications must involve a variety of people—students, staff, administration, parents and community—and a variety of media—print, visual, phone, radio, TV, newspaper. But no matter who sends the information or how it is sent, it needs to tell the whole story and be truthful. Successful public relations does not require slick Madison Avenue presentations, nor should it be bragging or boasting. Taxpayers should understand what the school is trying to accomplish. An informed public is essential.

The flow of information should be a balance between one-way and two-way. A system that is all one-way will be labeled propaganda, and no communication at all is a disaster. Ideas for public relations can range from the simple to the elaborate but in every case a year-round effort is most effective. No school system can gain the reputation of being outstanding without a carefully planned communications network. The school's image cannot be left to chance.

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Restoring Confidence in the Public Schools

John H. Wherry

FOR MORE than a decade we have been concerned, sometimes even preoccupied, with deteriorating levels of public confidence in education. And rightly so. In a democratic society every institution exists at the pleasure of the people, and surveys have shown that the people are not pleased. But they are interested. Recently we have seen national report after national report focus on education. They have spawned scores of state reports, hundreds of local reports and unprecedented media attention on our schools. Evidence abounds in the almost desperate attempts we have seen in state legislatures to consider tuition tax credit and voucher plans, force teacher competency examinations, extend the school day, lengthen the school year, increase graduation requirements and find ways to bring in technical experts from business and industry. Interest in education has never been higher.

The situation is clear. The public is not pleased with its educational system but places great value upon education. Changes will be made, experiments undertaken and solutions tested. Educational revolution, foment and reform will occur until the public is satisfied, until public confidence in the schools is once again restored to a satisfactory level.

The frustrating fact is that you know and I know that there are countless good things going on day after day in our schools, despite all the information to the contrary:

- We know that despite our warts and moles and scars, our schools are still doing the best job in history.
- Statistics show that U.S. adults are the most highly educated in the world.
- We can point out that a higher percentage of students are attending school regularly than ever before.
- We know that more U.S. students finish secondary school than in any other country.
- And we can all point to exemplary instructional programs in the local schools we know best.

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It's not that we aren't aware of education's faults. We know them painfully well. And we know that we must exert educational leadership individually and collectively to improve educational performance. As good as our schools are, we *know* that we can do better in virtually every area. And you and I know that we are working on it.

Why is it then, that everybody doesn't love us? Why can't they see that we are good people doing our best—and doing a pretty good job at that? Where has all the good news gone? Can we ever regain the public's confidence?

Absolutely!

In reaction to the concern among educators about eroding public confidence, Don Bagin, professor of communications and school administration at Glassboro State College in Glassboro, New Jersey, and former president of the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA), and I recently collaborated to examine the problem from a professional public relations perspective. The remainder of this chapter focuses on our findings.

10 Steps to Restoring Confidence

We would suggest 10 steps educators can take in restoring public confidence.

1) *We must make sure that everyone involved knows what our schools are doing well, what our problems are and what we are doing to solve them.* Education, and specifically public education, has become something of a scapegoat for a frustrated society experiencing rapid change, economic problems and the fear that our former position of world leadership in almost every field is eroding. Even as stories of violence, vandalism and cheating gather headlines in the media, a quick check in virtually any school system will show that on any given day more than 99 percent of the students are not involved in any of these problems.

But we cannot ignore the media headlines. Neither do we suggest that we can explain away all of our problems. Just as we keep the public informed about our successes, we must also be honest with them about our problems. Our experience shows that school systems that do so increase public support, not reduce it.

The key is to be honest about the problems and explain specifically what we're doing about them, sincerely and honestly.

2) *We must make sure that people have positive personal experiences with their schools.*—Don Bagin explains the point this way:

> *As a parent of three kids attending public schools, I've had a number of experiences with school personnel—some good and some not so good.*
>
> *Example: The day before Gary started first grade, I received a call from his teacher, who asked, "What can you tell me about Gary to help me do a better job of teaching him?" I knew that teacher cared enough to invest three extra minutes with my boy. And that's what most parents want—teachers and other school folks who care about their kids and communicate that caring.*
>
> *Contrast this experience with that of the uncaring teacher. My daughter, after a week of carrying lunch to school in first grade, finally mustered the courage to buy lunch. When she came home from school that day, she came to me crying. "Daddy, am I stupid?" she said. I asked, "What do you*

mean, Cathy?" "Well, Daddy, when I bought lunch today for the first time, I didn't know where to put the tray and stuff when I was done eating. So I stood there and the mean cafeteria lady said, 'Hey stupid, put them utensils where they belong.' I didn't know what to do because I didn't know what a utensil was. Then she shouted, 'Dummy!' . . . Then the nice cafeteria lady—the one who smiles—told me what to do. Daddy, am I a dummy?" A personal experience that wasn't relished.

Example Three: A teacher called—Cathy's third-trade teacher—and invited me to sit in on a class—a Tuesday for those whose last names begin with letters between A and G. "And this Tuesday, Mr. Bagin, we're doing something special about 10:00 a.m. Can you make it?" How different this is from the often cold, impersonal, formal letter inviting me to attend some Education Week Function because the principal is "desirous of my attendance."

I went to the class and was impressed. I saw the learning station that my daughter talked about. I saw some excellent teaching, and I saw my daughter learning. As I was leaving, I thanked the teacher and complimented her on the learning stations. I said, "I used to be a teacher; how do you find the time to change those learning stations so frequently?" "I'm so glad you asked, Mr. Bagin," she said as she walked to a closet and removed a large packet with my name on it. "Could you cut out these materials and paste them up for me and have them in by Monday for our next learning station?"

I felt I had been had. But all for a good cause—to help my daughter learn better.

All parents—all taxpayers—have had plenty of personal experiences with school employees. Are you comfortable with the way the phones are answered? With the often less than warm signs that greet visitors? Are you comfortable with the language that employees use when dealing with noneducators, words like "stanine," "cognitive," "affective?" As John Malloy observes in his book, *Live for Success*, "Jargon is for jerks."

We can't gain public support unless people are comfortable with what we're saying. Trust is not built with words people don't understand. Yet most school staff members have never been taught how to communicate effectively with our "customers" and taxpayers.

We strongly urge that you consider an in-service commitment to help all employees understand their role in communication, how they can communicate more effectively and their importance in the personal experiences the public has with the schools. It's one topic that has a message for all employees at all levels of the school system.

It is also appropriate to make some comments here about the role of the news media versus personal experience in developing public attitudes about our schools. We often think that if we could just get the media to run more good news about education, public attitudes would improve. But good news does not guarantee good attitudes or bad news, bad attitudes. That's a surprising fact, but there is abundant research to show that it's true. In essence, research says that the mass media (radio, TV, newspapers) are unsurpassed for providing information and that they basically serve to reinforce preexisting attitudes. That is to say, if people simply receive information through the mass media, the positive or negative attitudes they already have become a little stronger.

It is when people begin to discuss the information they have received with members of their families, their friends and their acquaintances, that their attitudes may change. Personal contact makes the difference.

Putting it another way, research tells us that the mass media are best used to provide information, and we've got a lot of information to provide. The mass media are also very powerful in strengthening attitudes the public already has. The majority of the people in most communities strongly support their local schools, and the mass media can provide invaluable assistance in maintaining those positive attitudes. But we misunderstand if we think the media cause people to have the opinions they do. Research says that it is interpersonal communication, face-to-face contact with other people we respect, that is the most powerful means of forming or changing the attitudes we have. Personal experiences with our schools are the key.

3) *We must agree that doing a good job is our most basic obligation as educators. We must constantly pursue excellence in education.*—Those districts enjoying the highest levels of public commitment and support are also the very ones that are seen as doing a good job—and are working harder to do even better. Our inadequacies, mistakes and follies will continue to get public attention—and they should. Our job, however, must be to build upon what we have already done, work hard on our weaknesses and make our schools even better.

We know what makes a good school. We know the environment must be orderly. We know students must be expected to achieve. We know the school principal plays a pivotal role. We know that time-on-task in the classroom produces measureable results.

The flood of reports and studies on education in the mid-1980s provided many more ideas for consideration, including:

- longer school day
- longer school year
- recognition of student achievement
- increased testing for promotion and graduation
- increased requirements in key subjects
- increased parent, community and business involvement
- curriculum revisions
- more homework
- innovative help for gifted and slow students
- innovative extracurricular activities
- innovative vocational education
- strengthened teacher standards
- merit pay for teachers
- career ladder for teachers
- recognition of outstanding teachers
- incentives to attract teachers
- new approaches to school management.

The point is that there is no substitute for hard work by the best minds we can assemble in order to improve our schools. Action in the public interest is the basis of good public relations. And doing a good job is the only foundation possible upon which to build public confidence in our schools.

4) *We must improve staff morale.*—In a research study at Glassboro State College school administrators were found to be much like management people in other areas. For some reason, they don't value the same things that employees value in relationships with each other. The Glassboro study showed that employees want:

1) to be told when they do a good job
2) to know what's going on where they work.

On a list of 10 items, employees usually placed these first and second, while managers listed them as least important to their employees.

Schools must tap the talents of their staffs. This means telling teachers when they do a good job, being visible in the schools so they know we care and involving them in key decisions before those decisions are made.

Burnout is real. It can result in everything from worry to chronic migraines and ulcers. Low morale and burnout stem from very specific causes:

- lack of recognition
- lack of involvement
- chronic discipline problems
- lack of planning time
- media assault
- public scrutiny
- reduced turnover in teaching staffs (thereby reducing the influx of new energy and new ideas).

There are few public relations problems more consistent or more elusive than low staff morale. The "them against us" mentality often separating staff and administration feeds the morale problem with a steady diet of mistrust and negative thinking. But administrators can combat staff burnout. They can keep their staff motivated. They can and must light a fire to revitalize the staff. The problem of staff morale must be addressed if we are to rebuild public confidence in our schools.

5) *We must become politically involved.*—School funding is determined by a political process, and school laws are developed by political bodies. School leaders must become more politically involved if their influence is to assist the community in the support of public education.

From a national perspective there is no better time than now to become politically involved. We see political power shifting from the national to state levels, with significant implications for the power structure. A shake-up is under way. Educators absolutely must be involved if we are responsibly to fulfill our mission as educational stewards in the community.

Units of study for high school government classes about how public schools function should be introduced into the curriculum. We teach about our system of local, state and national government, but rarely, if ever, do we include material about how public schools are governed and operated. It's little wonder that there is so little understanding on the part of so many about how it all works!

Political involvement by school leaders is nothing more than acceptance of our professional responsibility. We cannot successfully plead the case that schools

are an integral part of our community if we as school leaders will not accept the political responsibility that goes with that role. This political involvement should not be interpreted as strictly partisian political activism. There is plenty of opportunity for political activity as education advocates.

Dr. George Gallup put it well one afternoon when he was discussing the implications of the yearly Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes toward the Public Schools. He said he feels educators must be educational leaders in every aspect of community life. Educators must show concern for public libraries, for art, drama and other cultural opportunities in the community. They must be concerned about how companies educate their employees, about education for the young and the old.

We must be visibly concerned and active in the community—politically active—in the interest of education, not just K-12, but preschool, K-65 and beyond.

6) *We must take the public's concern about discipline seriously and work to address the problem.*—Year after year, in the annual Gallup survey, discipline is listed as the number one problem in schools today. Whether the problem is real or merely the public's perception, we must deal with it. If the public thinks it is real, it is real. And, if we are to win America's commitment to education, we must combat the problem or the perception, or both.

Perhaps most perplexing is knowing just what the public means when it talks about "discipline" in the first place. A series of regional meetings with parents, students and educators recently sponsored by the Missouri State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education provide us with some useful insights about what Missouri citizens mean when they talk about discipline. I can't prove it, but I'll bet that the public nationwide would agree with the answers from Missouri. There was strong agreement about what the biggest discipline problems are. In rank order the problems were identified as:

1) disruptive classroom behavior
2) student disrespect for authority
3) student apathy for learning
4) absenteeism and class cutting.

I suggest that we invite our staff, our students and members of our community to determine how they see discipline problems and work together to overcome them. It's easily demonstrated that strong discipline requirements are readily supported—even celebrated—in school systems where they have been developed and put into effect. There are plans that work in Houston, Atlanta, Little Rock and many other districts. We must take the concern over discipline seriously.

7) *We must stop fighting among ourselves and start building coalitions to support quality education.*—It's often difficult for parents, legislators and other taxpayers to understand us, especially when they see us calling each other names during negotiations or strikes. The television views of teachers throwing rocks at administrators crossing picket lines to enter school buildings don't build confidence in the schools. Neither do board comments that teachers aren't doing a good enough job to deserve a decent salary increase.

Coalition building may, however, be one of the key factors in winning America's commitment to education. Minnesota, California, Florida, Connecticut,

Oklahoma, Kansas and Iowa, among other states, are building effective coalitions. Government, business, labor and education leaders (teachers groups, administrators and board of education members) are working together to ensure a strong education system and a healthy economy. Each has come to realize that the job can't be done alone.

David Smoker, director of institutional planning for the Albuquerque Technical-Vocational Institute and former NSPRA president, makes a convincing case for burying the hatchet with teachers and becoming more sophisticated in our relationships with one another. He says: "I see no way to restore public confidence in American education without first restoring confidence—and respect—for America's teachers. America's teachers *are* American education."

8) *We must use every means at our command to get today's nonparents involved with their schools.*—In any effort to build commitment to education, school administrators must be aware that 72 percent of today's adults have no children in public schools. The birth rate remains low; inevitably political power is shifting to older citizens. There are more of them, and they are politically active. We must find ways to demonstrate that they, too, have an important stake in education today. We must involve this large group in the schools and keep them informed about their schools.

Nonparents, according to more than 100 public opinion surveys of school districts across the country, are interested in basically the same information as parents:

1) what's being taught and learned in schools today
2) how the basic subjects are being taught
3) how school funds are being spent
4) how the school board operates and reaches its decisions.

There is good reason for optimism. Today's non-school-connected citizens are the same people who just a few years ago provided very strong support for their schools. And recent elections show increasingly positive support from older citizens.

Community education programs and school volunteer programs offer ideal ways to get nonparents involved—older as well as younger nonparents. The Gallup Poll has made it clear year after year that citizens who have been in their schools for whatever reason consistently have more positive attitudes about them. With education programs for all groups, we can serve the public interest and gain badly needed support.

We know how to get nonparents meaningfully involved in our schools. School districts from Columbus, Ohio, to Greenville, South Carolina, Dade County, Florida, and the David Douglas School District in Oregon are all doing it, and they have dramatic stories to tell.

9) *We must involve the business community in our efforts to make good schools better.*—Many school systems are already cooperating with the business community. Many others are just waiting for someone to make the first move. Experience indicates that nothing will happen unless the school superintendent takes the initiative in contacting the chief executive officer of the company.

For too long educators have avoided seeking the help of the business community. Except for Business-Education Day, we have done little to tap the talent

and support of business and industry leaders, and that's a shame. In some districts, through Adopt-a-School and similar programs, businesses are offering speakers, providing student internships and special instruction in technical areas and tutoring in basic skills. Businesses are also considering the special needs of districts, and they don't cross over the line of decision making that is reserved for educators.

We have a lot in common with business leaders. Even as we in education have suffered as public confidence has declined, business leaders have watched public confidence in their leadership plummet, too. Business leaders want good relationships with the community. And so do we. Business leaders want graduates with solid skills so they won't have to train them in basics. So do we. Business leaders have sons and daughters and grandchildren attending our schools. So do we.

As community members, leaders in business and industry can help in many ways. It's in our best interest to see that it happens.

10) *We must establish two-way communication with all school audiences.*—In all schools our communication efforts must be two-way. Educators must listen as well as talk—listen to employees, listen to students, listen to the community. Communication must come up. It can no longer just come down from the top. We must be attuned to what the community is talking about—is thinking about our schools—before a large group tells us at a board meeting or at the polls.

A commitment to communicate better and an organized communication plan are critical if schools are to gain community support. It won't happen by chance!

A simple and powerful way to communicate better is to establish a key communicator network in your schools and community. The idea is being used in hundreds of school districts, and it works. It helps you identify sparks before they become fires. It allows you to get news out in a hurry without worrying about the mood of some news media editor. It gives you a built-in rumor squelching device. And it does all this at no cost.

Here's how it works. You identify key people on your staff and in the community, people who talk to and are believed by lots of people. They might be a part of the formal power structure—perhaps the PTA president or the town council president. They might not. They may be barbers, bartenders, beauticians, dentists, restaurant owners or gas station attendants—people who talk to people.

All you do is invite them to one 60-minute meeting—never to meet again—and you tell them that in the letter of invitation and the follow-up phone call. At the meetings, limited to eight or 10 people, explain that you'll put them on the mailing list and call them occasionally with important news about the schools. At the same time, emphasize to them that you want to hear school rumors and questions that are making the rounds in the community. You will have developed your own instant, two-way communications network ready for use when needed. The same approach can be used with staff members, and even with students. You'll always know what's on their mind, and that's a giant step forward.

The 10 steps outlined above can go a long way to help restore public confidence in our schools.

Eight Steps to Building Good Public Relations

There are other, less global ideas that can serve us well in our efforts to build public confidence.

1) *We can learn how to provide balanced news to the media.*—I am certain that none of us are interested in "controlling" the news to ensure that only positive things about schools appear. We all know how important the free press is to our way of life. Instead, what I think we are asking for is a fair shake. We want the public to have balanced information. And we can learn how to provide that.

Do you know how easy it is for the media to get bad news? Have you ever visited a newspaper, radio or television newsroom? If you have, you know that it is chaotic. Pressure to meet deadlines is intense. Phones are ringing, teletypes clatter, there are piles of mail everywhere and shortwave radios interrupt as they scan the police department, fire department, sheriff's department and highway patrol channels for immediate notice of problems as they happen. Daily newspapers often print only about one-tenth of the material available to them on any given day. Radio and television use much less than that.

Now, tell me, when was the last time something positive about your schools was broadcast over the police radio? Is the Associated Press or United Press International carrying a story today about the excellent kindergarten teacher or the high school math program you are so proud of? Is there a news release in that big stack on the editor's desk about the inflationary costs you are facing for chalk and scissors and paste and cleaning supplies, or textbooks? Is one of the telephones ringing a school person with a news item?

My whole point is that we cannot reasonably expect that the news media will always come to us seeking our school news. There is usually more than enough material to work with without any school news. Negative news is regularly available to the reporters without their having to lift a finger or move off their chair. And reporters are human just as we are. It's much easier to use negative news, because it is so easy to get.

In addition, the responsibility of the news media is a very general one—to keep the public informed on important news of the day. They have no obligation to build support for our schools. They are not required to tell parents about upcoming parent-teacher conferences or to keep our staff members acquainted with board positions during negotiations. They are not really interested in filling their limited space with details of every subject we think the public should be informed about.

The whole secret to balanced school news is for us to make information easily available. It's easy for us to do a quick overview of good story possibilities, outline four or five on a single sheet, duplicate the sheet on colored paper so it's eye catching and easy to find and send it along to the media. That's called a "tipsheet." Those same ideas can be telephoned in. Someone can stop by the editor's desk in person once in a while. Brief news releases are effective. Often reporters will visit a school if invited, and certainly all media should receive school publications.

2) *We can set up our own channels of communication.*—We can also stop relying so heavily on the traditional news media. There are at least two sides to every story, and we must make sure that our side is told. We must not default on

our obligation to communicate with the public by expecting the news media to do our job.

Thus we must set up our own channels. We can start staff newsletters, community newsletters and school building newsletters. We can make use of free radio and television public service announcements. Even activity signboards outside many schools can be used for more than just announcing the date of the next game. Lots of people drive by our schools every day, and what if those signs were changed several times each week with messages like, "Sixth-graders are writing paragraphs," "Third-graders are studying fractions" or "Seniors are studying computers at area businesses." The opportunities are great, and the news media cannot, will not and should not do it all. We must do it for ourselves.

3) *We can see that a top-level administrator is assigned responsibility for managing the district's public relations program.*—The most basic responsibility board members share with their administrative staff is serving the best interests of the public they represent by providing the best possible education system with the public resources that are available. Strong communication is essential in fulfilling that responsibility. With the many messages and communication media competing for the attention of the public today, it is absolutely essential that someone be responsible for setting up and maintaining the communication system schools must have.

I think it's best to hire a trained communication professional to work full time or part time on public relations. If that's not possible, someone must be given the responsibility. The public will no longer tolerate even any hints that public officials are hiding behind one excuse or another, including lack of money, in order to avoid providing them with information about their schools.

4) *We can provide adequate funds for a good public relations program.*—The old lament—"You should see our budget; there's just no way"—isn't convincing. Extensive communication activity takes place day after day in our schools whether we realize it or not. Careful analysis shows that virtually every school employee—from cooks and bus drivers to librarians, secretaries, teachers and administrators—already spends a significant part of time communicating with the public. These communications and personal contacts during working hours, as well as personal time in the community, exert untold influence in determining public attitudes about our schools. If it were possible to compute the percentage of all employee time spent on communication and multiply that by annual salaries, we would find out how much the school district is already investing in communications.

Then the question very clearly becomes not whether we can afford it, but whether we are getting our money's worth. A very small investment for salary and materials can make sure our communications program is well-managed.

5) *We can adopt a written policy statement on public relations.*—Policy is the responsibility of the board. Policy is the foundation for every program and activity in our schools. We have found in our work with schools throughout the country that a written, visible board commitment to providing factual, honest, accurate information to the public receives strong community support.

6) *We can be sure that our school district public relations and communications efforts are focused on the school building unit.*—The entire school system is represented by each individual school building in the community it serves. This is where most people, parents and others alike, have most of their personal contacts with our schools. It is where the face-to-face, interpersonal, attitude-

forming contacts take place. We can encourage school building newsletters, opportunities for members of the community to visit the schools in action and use of available space in each school by senior citizens, volunteers and other community groups. School building units that are seen as good citizens in the community invariably develop strong community support and highly positive attitudes about the entire school system.

7) *We can provide public relations and communications in-service training activites for all staff members.*—We know that all staff members are important, but we often give them little guidance in what to do. Programs should be included for everyone in our staff development planning.

8) *We can remember, above all, that good news and good public attitudes are based on good actions by our schools.*—That is the heart of public relations. Public relations has been called the practice of social responsibility. And that is the most basic obligation of school leaders. We are responsible for seeing that the schools serve the best interests of the public. There is simply no way to make people think that their schools are better than they really are. It's not just dishonest; it's not possible!

Conclusion

In our society today we are programmed to look for instant answers. As school leaders, we look for them, too. But there are no instant answers to building public confidence in education; neither is there any magic. The steps to building, or rebuilding, public confidence in our schools are well documented. They are based on common sense and old-fashioned hard work.

There is much to be hopeful about as we pursue the task of building confidence. We are working with a public that already has an enormous reservoir of commitment to education. Even the fact that our critics are so vocal today, so persistent in their attacks, is a good sign. They feel that education is so important that our society cannot afford to do a poor job.

Our critics know, as we know, and our public knows—that education will determine the future of our society. We know what to do. It's time to go to work.